

Bill: H7415 – RELATING TO EDUCATION -- ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Name: Lucrecia Mendez

Role: Community Leader

Position: Family Engagement Coordinator

Chair McNamara, First Vice Chair Noret, Second Vice Chair Kislak, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on H7415 – RELATING TO EDUCATION -- ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS. My name is Lucrecia, and I am a community leader. I am writing to express my strong opposition to this legislation because I believe in fairness, opportunity, and strong public school options for all children.

For many families in Rhode Island, charter schools help fill important gaps in the education system. They can offer different approaches to learning, smaller school environments, or specialized programming that may not always be available elsewhere. These options are incredibly valuable to parents who are trying to find the best possible educational experience for their children.

The high demand for charter schools shows just how important these options are to families. Each year, many students remain on waitlists because there simply are not enough seats available. This demonstrates that families across Rhode Island are actively seeking more educational choices, not fewer.

Significantly, the July 1, 2025, stipulation overturns previously granted pre-approvals that would expand charter school opportunities for families, despite the fact that a sound and public process had been duly followed. This action introduces significant uncertainty into established public decision-making processes and undermines confidence in the officials responsible for carrying them out. Most importantly, it risks disenfranchising the voices of community members who participated in good faith in that process.

Legislation like H7415 would limit opportunities for families who are simply trying to do what is best for their children. All parents, regardless of their zip code or socioeconomic status, deserve access to strong public school options and the ability to choose the environment where their children can thrive.

I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose H7415 and continue supporting policies that empower parents and expand high-quality educational opportunities for Rhode Island students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lucrecia Mendez  
Foster, Rhode Island