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From: Nelson Miranda <nmiranda522@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 10:12 AM
To: House Education Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of H 7415 – Charter School Expansion Moratorium

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Dear Chair and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Nelson Miranda, and I am a public school teacher in Providence, Rhode Island. I am writing to express my strong support for **2026 – H 7415**, which would place a temporary pause on the creation or expansion of charter schools for the 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029 school years.

Public schools are the backbone of our education system because we are required to serve **every student who walks through the door**. That includes students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students experiencing poverty, and students facing significant academic or behavioral challenges.

In Rhode Island, these high-need populations are concentrated in traditional public school districts. For example, **multilingual learners now make up about 12.5% of all students statewide**, and the population has grown by nearly **63% since 2015**.

However, these students are heavily concentrated in just a few districts. **Providence alone accounts for about 50.6% of all multilingual learners in the state**, and multilingual learners now represent **about 39% of students in the Providence Public School District**.

When we compare charter schools and district schools, we see important differences in the populations served.

State data shows that in Rhode Island:

- About **16% of charter school students are multilingual learners**, compared to **11% statewide**.
- However, charter schools enroll **smaller percentages of students receiving special education services** than traditional public schools.
- In the **2019-2020 school year, about 13% of charter school students received special education services, compared to 15% of students statewide**.

Looking specifically at Providence highlights the disparities even more clearly. According to the Rhode Island Senate Fiscal Office, **about 22.2% of students in the Providence Public School District qualify as English language learners**, while charter schools enrolling Providence students averaged **only about 6.7%**.

At the same time, charter expansion has dramatically changed enrollment patterns. Over the last decade, **charter and state school enrollment in Rhode Island has more than tripled**, while traditional district enrollment has declined.

In Providence specifically, **district enrollment dropped by about 18% while charter enrollment grew by more than 300%**.

This shift has a real financial impact. When students leave district schools for charters, the funding follows the student. However, the district still must maintain buildings, transportation systems, special education programs, and staff for the students who remain. That means fewer resources for the schools educating the highest concentrations of high-need students.

At the same time, some large charter networks operate with significant executive compensation. Executives at the charter network **Achievement First** have earned salaries exceeding **\$280,000 annually**, and leadership roles at **Excel Academy Charter Schools** have been advertised in the **\$180,000–\$210,000 range**. These salaries are funded through the same public education dollars that districts rely on to educate all students.

Meanwhile, many charter school teachers are asked to work **longer school days, longer school years, and significantly more hours**, often with fewer workplace protections.

H 7415 does not eliminate charter schools. It simply places a temporary pause on expansion so the state can evaluate the fiscal and educational impact that charter growth has had on Rhode Island’s public education system.

Our public schools are the only institutions legally required to educate every student, regardless of language, disability, or circumstance. At a time when districts like Providence are educating the majority of the state’s highest-need students, it is essential that we protect and strengthen the resources available to these schools.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support **H 7415**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nelson Miranda
Providence Public School Teacher