

March 5, 2026

Dear Members of the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 7415 and the proposed three-year moratorium on new charter schools.

As a classroom teacher in Providence, I see firsthand how charter expansion affects our neighborhood schools. Funding that leaves our district for charter schools directly impacts the resources available to our students. We have lost staffing, support services, and programs that our students desperately need to succeed.

In Providence, nearly 25% of students now attend charter schools. At the same time, our public schools are expected to continue serving every student who walks through our doors, including students with significant special needs and those who arrive mid-year after leaving other schools. This includes students like one of my former first graders who joined us after he was “counseled out” of a charter school for mild behavioral concerns and needing academic support.

Declining enrollment puts our communities at risk. Our schools are caring places where students feel known, supported, and connected. Continued charter expansion threatens the stability and future of our schools.

As a public school teacher and a parent of children who went through the public school system, I believe strongly in public education. We must focus on strengthening and fully utilizing the public schools that already serve the majority of our students. A reduction in the number of charter schools and a pause on charter expansion would give Rhode Island the time needed to evaluate the current system and ensure that all students are served fairly.

Thank you for considering my perspective and for your commitment to the students and educators of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Robyn Gormley-Jackson, NBCT
Local Site Professional Development Coordinator, Providence Teachers Union