



**State of Rhode Island**  
**Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos**

March 9, 2026

Representative Joseph McNamara  
Chair, House Committee on Education  
82 Smith St, Room 135  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Letter of Support for HB7417: An Act Relating To Education -- The Save Rhode Island School Libraries Act

Dear Representative McNamara:

I write to you in support for each HB7417: An Act Relating To Education -- The Save Rhode Island School Libraries Act.

Every child in Rhode Island deserves access to a school library staffed by a certified librarian. Books are a gateway for students to grow their minds, empathize with others, and improve their academic performance. Yet, according to a study published by the State of Rhode Island in 2019, over 40% of elementary schools have libraries that are only open part-time, and over 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of schools have to share their librarian with another school.

HB7417 calls on the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure that every public school in Rhode Island has a school library in a dedicated and permanent space, and that the library be staffed by a certified librarian.

The benefits of school libraries are clear and well-known. The Center for American Progress found that “More than 50 years of research across more than 60 studies show that students with access to well-resourced school libraries with certified librarians consistently perform better academically and score higher on standardized assessments.” Rhode Island has an exciting opportunity to meet the needs of our students with this bill. I urge you to favorably vote this bill out of committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabina Matos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sabina Matos

Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor

CC: Representative Rebecca Kislak