



WEST WARWICK TEACHERS' ALLIANCE

American Federation of Teachers, Local 1017

P.O. Box 462, West Warwick, RI 02893 • (t): 401-787-5784 • (e): wwta.aft1017@gmail.com

President

Paul J. Bovenzi

Executive Vice

President (Elem)

Audra L. McPhillips

Vice President

Secondary

Michael T. Shunney

Treasurer

James Owen

Secretary

Paul J. Bovenzi

**Committee on
Political Education
(COPE)**

Michael T. Shunney

**Community
Relations &
Education (CoRE)**

Mary A. Flynn
Bergeron

**Education
Committee
Chairperson**

Kristin E. Petrarca

**Grievance
Committee**

Chairperson

Giuseppe Lancellotta

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Members of the House Education Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

March 10, 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill No. 8131

Dear Chair McNamara and Members of the House Education Committee,

In Rhode Island, we understand the importance of investing in our education system. Through the years, we continue to adapt to offer our youth the best opportunities and set them up for success. We have, thus far, seen charter schools as an integral part of this process but it is time to take a look at how charter schools utilize those investments.

Between the public schools that represent cities and towns and charter schools, Rhode Island has what amounts to 60+ individual districts with their own administrations and oversight processes. While public schools are held to high standards of financial reporting, the financial reporting process for charter schools is much looser. It is past time for us to hold these schools to the same standards.

Additionally, when we look at the method of funding charter schools, we have a responsibility to ensure that the investments being made are equitable. I believe that the best way to ensure funds are being used most effectively and to their best advantage in support of students is the creation of a special joint legislative commission, as outlined in this bill. I implore you to support House Bill No. 8131 and demystify the funding process and expenditures for charter schools in Rhode Island to ensure all of our students are receiving what they are entitled to: our best.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Anne E. Godin
COPE Chair

West Warwick Teachers' Alliance, Local 1017

A Union of Professionals