

Dear House Education Committee Members

H 8131

I am writing to you as a teacher in the Pawtucket School Department to express my strong opposition to the continued expansion of charter schools in Rhode Island.

Every year in Pawtucket, we work with a diverse group of students who rely on the stability and resources of our public school system. Our district serves a high number of multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and families facing economic hardship. Public schools are designed to serve every child who walks through the door, regardless of their needs or circumstances.

The expansion of charter schools continues to divert critical funding away from districts like Pawtucket. While students may leave for charter schools, the fixed costs for our district—transportation, facilities, staffing, and specialized services—remain. This creates real financial pressure on our schools and ultimately impacts the educational opportunities available to the majority of students who remain in district classrooms.

As educators, we see firsthand how much our students benefit when resources are invested directly into public schools—smaller class sizes, student support services, updated materials, and safe, well-maintained facilities. These investments strengthen entire communities and ensure that all students, not just a select group, have access to quality educational opportunities.

I respectfully urge the General Assembly to prioritize strengthening Rhode Island's public school districts rather than expanding charter schools. Our focus should be on fully supporting the neighborhood public schools that serve the vast majority of students in Pawtucket and across the state.

Thank you for your time and for your continued commitment to the students and families of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Theodore Murray

PE/Health Educator

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