



WEST WARWICK TEACHERS' ALLIANCE

American Federation of Teachers, Local 1017

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To: **House Education Committee**
From: **Paul Bovenzi, President West Warwick Teachers' Alliance (WWTA)**
Date: **March 17, 2026**
Re: **HB 7526 - Student and Teacher Classroom Safety**

Chair McNamara, Education Committee Members:

My name is Paul Bovenzi and I am the President of the West Warwick Teachers Alliance. I am writing today on behalf of my members to express my strong support for HB 7526, concerning student and teacher classroom safety. This proposed legislation is a necessary and balanced measure that will empower educators, protect the learning environment for all students, and establish clear, consistent procedures for addressing disruptive behavior.

This bill recognizes the teacher's critical role in maintaining order and fostering a focused educational setting. By granting teachers the authority to initiate the removal of a student who is chronically disruptive or poses an immediate threat to safety, the bill provides a crucial mechanism to safeguard the learning opportunities of the entire class.

The requirement for the principal or designee to review the incident, notify parents within 24 hours, and develop a return-to-classroom plan ensures that removals are not arbitrary and are paired with a proactive strategy for the student's success.

Mandating consultation with the classroom teacher before a student's return and convening a review committee if the teacher objects ensures the professional judgment and safety concerns of the educator are respected.

Crucially, the bill explicitly mandates that all rights and protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are afforded to students with disabilities, ensuring that disciplinary measures are equitable and legally compliant.

In short, this bill is a commitment to a foundational principle of education: that a high-quality, focused learning environment must be safe and orderly. It equips our teachers with the tools they need to manage their classrooms effectively while instituting a robust system of administrative review and student protection.

By supporting this act, you are supporting our educators, our students, and the integrity of our public schools.

Respectfully Submitted,

A Union of Professionals