



Statement of Support for Rhode Island H. 7895

April 1, 2026

Dear Members of the Rhode Island House Education Committee,

My name is Brendan Bouffard, and I'm Staff Attorney at Fairplay. I write to offer strong support for the goals of H. 7895. Fairplay is the leading national nonprofit fighting to protect kids from Big Tech. For the past quarter-century, we have helped countless children by pressuring tech companies into changing their deadly business model and design practices. Our achievements include stopping Meta from releasing a version of Instagram for little kids; holding Meta, Google, and Amazon accountable for violating children's privacy law; and helping pass phone-free schools legislation in 20 states.

Parents and educators [across the country](#) are growing [frustrated](#) by the drastic increase in screen time at schools over the last decade. The proliferation of one-to-one devices and screen-based learning through [gamified educational technology](#) has coincided with [poor educational outcomes](#) and is linked to [shallow engagement](#), [fragmented attention](#), and [worsened cognitive development](#). These challenges are reflected in a 2022 [survey](#) by EdWeek Research Center in which 88 percent of teachers, principals, and district leaders said that as screen time increased, so did learning challenges and problems with student behavior. Despite lofty promises from educational technology companies, and billions spent by school districts, our [student performance is worse now than it was a decade ago](#) - when the majority of classrooms were relatively screen free.

In addition, the proliferation of educational technology in schools jeopardizes student safety and privacy. [School devices](#) have been used by students to access pornography, participate in cyberbullying, and witness content related to suicide and violence. They can also serve as the initial point of contact in cases of [online sexual abuse](#). Recent [data breaches](#) on educational technology platforms have also improperly disclosed students' sensitive personal information, including dates of birth, addresses, social security numbers, and medical and disciplinary records. What's more, parents are helpless to protect their children from these risks, as it is [often difficult or impossible](#) to ascertain which educational technologies are being deployed in their districts.

H. 7895 seeks to reign in the excess of educational technology in Rhode Island. It gives parents more insight into the apps being used in their children's classrooms, and more control over their children's total screen time. It also gives parents the choice to opt their children out of educational technology use, by requiring schools to provide pen and paper alternatives for classroom work. H. 7895 also seeks to ensure that educational technology used in the state is both safe and effective - a common sense minimum standard that should be in place for the education of Rhode Island's children and teens.

We support the goals of H. 7895 and urge members of the House Education Committee to work with Representative Caldwell and her co-sponsors to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

Brendan Bouffard
Staff Attorney for Fairplay