



## Testimony in Support of H8326

April 2, 2026

To the Rhode Island House Education Committee:

I'm writing today in support of H8326, which enables for school closures during a state of emergency to be excused from minimum school day calendar requirements.

At the League, we believe that showing up matters. When kids and teens attend school, they develop socially, academically, and emotionally. We know that being in the classroom allows students to connect with adults, collaborate with friends, and engage in hands-on learning. School attendance is the foundation for a student's growth and belonging.

Showing up matters, but student safety comes first. There are times when schools must close to ensure student safety. H8326 addresses the rare and extreme circumstances of a state of emergency, which are distinct from common school closures for unsafe conditions like severe weather. This bill provides a common-sense approach by excusing days missed specifically due to a governor-declared emergency and removing the requirement to submit waiver requests. This legislation allows school leaders to focus less on paperwork and more on what matters most after an emergency: getting kids back to school and engaged in learning.

**For these reasons, we support H8326.**

Thank you for your consideration and continued commitment to the children and families of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren K. B. Matlach".

Lauren K. B. Matlach  
Deputy Director, Rhode Island League of Charter Public Schools