

**Subject: Support for S-2208 / H-7271: Strengthening UCAP for the Future**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nelson Delva, and I am a supporter/community partner of the Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program (UCAP).

UCAP was founded in 1989, long before alternative education models were widely available in Rhode Island, and has served students who need accelerated learning and a smaller, structured environment for 37 years.

UCAP is important because it helps kids and families access real opportunities-like getting involved in a boxing program where they can learn, grow, and feel part of something positive. When youth have support that removes barriers, they're more likely to show up consistently and take part in activities that build confidence. Boxing also creates a safe, structured environment where kids can focus on skill-building, teamwork, and personal goals. With programs supported by UCAP, kids don't just attend classes-they gain mentorship and the chance to develop habits that last beyond the gym.

Staying active is essential for kids, both physically and mentally. Regular movement helps strengthen coordination, stamina, and overall health, but it also supports emotional balance by giving energy a healthy outlet. A boxing program naturally encourages routine-warm-ups, technique practice, conditioning, and cooldowns-so kids learn that showing up matters. Beyond fitness, the consistency of training can help kids feel more confident and in control of their day-to-day lives, because they know they're working on themselves every time they come to practice.

Boxing is also a powerful tool for mental health and discipline. Training requires focus, patience, and respect-kids learn to follow directions, handle corrections constructively, and work through challenges step by step. Over time, they build resilience, improve impulse control, and develop confidence through effort. I'm also proud to share that my assistant is a UCAP alumni, and she's happy to see UCAP still going strong-excited to be able to help where she once went to school. Her journey is a reminder of how support can turn into impact, and she brings that same motivation into the gym every day.

S-2208 / H-7271 strengthens UCAP's long-term sustainability by allowing additional districts to refer students and clarifying governance and admissions authority. This legislation reflects today's educational landscape and ensures that UCAP remains a stable, accountable public option for families across Rhode Island.

I respectfully urge your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,  
Nelson Delva, Owner of New World Jungle Fitness  
Pawtucket, RI