

May 6, 2026

Chair and Members of the House Education Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly

RE: Support for H7420 – Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act

Dear Chair and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Amy Ferreira, and I am writing in support of H7420, the Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act.

I am a resident of Foster/Glocester and an active community member working to bring people together around solutions that strengthen our schools while being mindful of the financial realities facing our towns. Through organizing local working groups that include parents, educators, students, and community leaders, I have seen firsthand how deeply people care about education—and how strained our current system has become under the weight of unfunded mandates.

At its core, H7420 addresses a fundamental imbalance: local communities are being asked to carry increasing financial responsibilities without corresponding state support. This creates a system where municipalities must make difficult trade-offs between maintaining high-quality educational services and protecting taxpayers from rising property taxes.

In Foster and Glocester, like many communities across Rhode Island, we are working hard to find common ground—bringing people together not to argue about problems, but to collaborate on solutions. One of the clearest themes that has emerged from these conversations is the need for greater transparency, flexibility, and fairness in how education requirements are funded.

The cost of transportation, curriculum implementation, and special education mandates continues to rise, and in many cases, these obligations are imposed without the necessary funding to support them. This is creating an

unsustainable environment that is eroding the strength and stability of our public school systems over time.

Unfunded mandates limit local decision-making, create budget instability, and shift the burden onto taxpayers who are already stretched thin. They also force difficult and often unintended trade-offs. While student mental health and physical health must remain top priorities, districts are increasingly constrained by rigid, state-driven models that limit flexibility in how resources are allocated to meet those needs most effectively at the local level.

There are opportunities to address many of these challenges more effectively at the state level, reducing the financial pressure placed on municipalities while still ensuring that students receive the comprehensive support they deserve.

H7420 represents a meaningful step toward restoring balance. By addressing unfunded mandates, this legislation helps ensure that when requirements are placed on school districts, there is a clearer path to funding them responsibly. This supports both educational equity and taxpayer sustainability—two goals that should go hand in hand.

Importantly, this bill does not lower expectations for our schools. Instead, it creates the conditions for those expectations to be met in a way that is realistic, transparent, and fair to local communities.

As someone who is actively working to foster productive dialogue and build consensus at the local level, I strongly believe that state policy should support—not complicate—these efforts. H7420 moves us in that direction.

I respectfully urge you to support this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you for your service,

Amy Ferreira

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