

House Education Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

May 18, 2026

Re: Testimony in Opposition to House bill Number H8531 titled An Act Relating To Education - Compulsory Attendance.

Dear Chairperson McNamara and members of the House Education Committee:

I am Jessica Morgan, a parent from Richmond, RI and District 39. I oppose House bill 2026-H8531, titled An Act Relating To Education - Compulsory Attendance. I began homeschooling my two children in 2020 due to having high-risk family members during the Covid-19 pandemic. My children thrived learning at home, so we decided to continue homeschooling permanently.

We are a secular homeschool family, focused on providing the best possible learning experiences for my two children. In addition to the state mandated requirements, my children are learning Mandarin Chinese and German, take cello and violin lessons, play in a strings ensemble, take gymnastics classes, play soccer, and swim. They learned about the colonization of the United States by visiting Roanoke Island in North Carolina and Jamestown Settlement in Virginia. When they were learning about the geography of the Great Lakes, they visited each one in person. My son even won an honorable mention in a national mapping competition for his StoryMap on public libraries in Rhode Island in 2023. My children have the ability and time to deep dive into topics that they are passionate about precisely because we homeschool.

I oppose bill H8531 because:

- Rhode Island's current homeschool law is already working and does not need additional regulation. There are already existing child protection laws that apply to all families in the state.
- The proposed revisions will allow local school committees to delay or deny homeschooling requests whenever they believe it is "not in the best interest of the child" or question a parent's "competency" or "capacity" to teach. This subjective wording may lead to inconsistent or biased decisions rather than clear standards.
- Parents should remain the primary decision makers on their children's education.

I urge you to vote against bill H8531.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak against bill H8531. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jessica Morgan  
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District 39