

To: House Education Committee, Rhode Island General Assembly

Date: May 19, 2026

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

I am writing to oppose H8531. I am a homeschooling parent in North Smithfield, Rhode Island, and I ask that you vote against this bill.

My family homeschools through a Christian co-op alongside other dedicated families in our community. We choose this path because we know our children: their learning styles, their struggles, their gifts, in ways no bureaucratic approval process can assess. We have built a rigorous and loving educational environment, and it is working.

H8531 would allow local school committees to delay or deny a family's right to homeschool based on vague, subjective standards like whether they judge it "in the best interest of the child" or question a parent's "competency." These standards are undefined, unreviewable, and ripe for inconsistent or politically motivated enforcement. Rhode Island law already requires homeschooling families to meet educational requirements. This bill adds no educational value; it adds only bureaucratic power over families who have done nothing wrong.

Most troubling: while approval is pending, children would be forced to remain enrolled in public school. This means that even a fully capable, committed homeschooling parent could have their children's education held hostage to an administrative timeline, with no right of appeal to a court. That is not a safeguard. It is a punishment of fit parents without cause.

I urge this committee to reject H8531. Please protect the rights of Rhode Island families to direct the education of their own children.

Respectfully,

Maggie Camara

North Smithfield, Rhode Island

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