

House Education Committee  
State of Rhode Island General Assembly

May 18, 2026

**Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 8531**

Dear House Education Committee Members:

My name is Saman Khalid, and I am writing as a working and homeschooling mother of four in Providence, Rhode Island. Our family made the decision to homeschool two years ago, and we have had no regrets since. Homeschooling has greatly improved our quality of life, and provided us with the flexibility and time to not only prioritize our family unit, but also to nurture our children's education and interests in ways that they are helping them truly thrive. We are able to tailor their schedules to best suit their learning styles, and my children are learning how to become more independent, self-directed learners with an emphasis on critical thinking and character development. Homeschooling for us was not a reactive or fear-based decision, but rather one that was driven by our desire as parents to give our children the most wholesome education that can be offered to them, including wider engagement with the community and world around them. We are involved in the greater homeschooling community here in Rhode Island as well as some programs in Massachusetts, which our children look forward to continuing in the future.

The decision on how best to educate our children is not something that should be at the discretion of school committees, particularly when the exact terms ("competency" and "capacity") are not clearly defined and are open for interpretation by school committee members. Current state laws already exist for homeschool regulation which require us to report to our city districts regarding our children's attendance and academic instruction. There is no need for additional requirements or potential restrictions to families that desire to homeschool. This bill could create space for unfair and discriminatory practices, based on the undefined terms and discretion afforded to school committees to deny requests to homeschool.

If the presumed intention of this bill is for child protection and welfare, as in the case of serious truancy cases, this important goal is one that should fall within the scope of child protection laws (i.e. DCYF and law enforcement). The safety of children is of the utmost importance and is the priority for us as parents. However, it is not something that should be muddled with homeschool regulations especially when the overwhelmingly vast majority of homeschooling parents- like us- made the decision to do so in the best interests for our children's mental-emotional wellbeing and futures.

Respectfully,

*Saman Khalid*

Saman Khalid, LMHC