

Lisa Cataldi
House Committee on Education, Secretary
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

May 18, 2026

Re: Testimony in OPPOSITION to House Bill H8531 titled RELATING TO EDUCATION --
COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Dear Chairperson McNamara and members of the RI House Committee:

I am Sonja Milburn from Cranston, District 2, and a member of ENRICHri, a secular homeschool community.

I oppose House bill H8531, titled RELATING TO EDUCATION -- COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE.

I oppose bill H8531 because as it stands, current homeschooling laws in the state of Rhode Island are clear and competently written. There are already additional laws and investigative systems in place to protect vulnerable Rhode Island children. The law being proposed contains vague mechanisms that would impact law-abiding homeschool families. Vague mechanisms that do not serve a specific purpose. They allow for possible broad oversight, broad interpretation, and inconsistent enforcement of the law in the future. The current law as it stands has been very effective. There is absolutely no evidence supporting any failure of the current homeschool laws in place.

Our family chose to homeschool in order to expand on the educational resources our amazing state has to offer the community, and to provide a deeper learning experience for our children. We enjoy the freedom to choose private schooling for our children. Our children are thriving socially and academically, in a healthy balance of their home community, as well as the world community. Our family is not religious and does not chose to homeschool for religious reasons. We, as parents, have worked globally in our careers. I, myself, lived outside the US as a child for a period of time, enriching my perspective on our globally community. We feel we have an opportunity to approach our children's education with a world view, as well as within the greater Rhode Island community. The friendships and connections we have made as a family, both locally, and abroad, are something we treasure and are very grateful for.

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,

Sonja Milburn

RI Congressional District 2.