

Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Finance Committee,

I am here in support of House Bill 6045.

My name is Law-Rel Butler and I attended Providence Public Schools for my High School experience. Coming from smaller schools it was a huge shock to enter larger classroom sizes and having teachers who did not even know your name. This took away the intimacy of education, and also strained the relationships I had with adult staff in the building. I personally did not feel like there was an adult in the building that was concerned for my safety and learning besides my coaches.

Having social workers in schools is important because you need people who have the capacity and tools to talk to young people about their feelings both in and out of school. Teachers and administrators can not play this role, we need folks who are properly trained and culturally competent in the cultures within their student body.

Students need someone who is able to connect them to resources to help them long term and eliminate some of the barriers that are in the way. There also needs to be more than one because one person alone can not handle large student bodies. They also need to be full time, as students need consistent access to them. Students issues do not only happen on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so that should not be the only days that they are in school. Social workers are important, students' feelings are important, so that means that this bill is super important lets make this happen!