



May 1, 2025

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for H-5745 and the proposed amendment to the Rhode Island Student Success Act that would reduce the current three-year residency requirement for in-state tuition eligibility to six months for all students. This change is both timely and essential for ensuring equitable access to higher education for all Rhode Island students, regardless of how long they have resided in the state.

A three-year residency requirement places an undue burden on many individuals who are eager to pursue higher education and contribute meaningfully to our communities and economy. Many students—including recent transplants, immigrants, military families, and those relocating for work or family reasons—face significant financial obstacles under the current policy. These students often consider Rhode Island their home and are committed to building their futures here. Reducing the residency requirement to six months would remove an arbitrary barrier and better reflect the realities of a modern, mobile population.

This amendment would not only expand educational access but also strengthen our state's workforce by enabling more residents to pursue degrees and credentials that meet Rhode Island's economic needs. Research consistently shows that access to affordable education leads to higher earning potential, greater civic engagement, and reduced reliance on social services—all outcomes that benefit the entire state.

Moreover, aligning our residency policy with those of other states that have adopted shorter requirements enhances our competitiveness and reinforces our commitment to fairness and opportunity.

As the state's largest college access and success program, Onward We Learn is committed to reducing barriers for all young people seeking a postsecondary degree. I urge you to support this amendment to the Rhode Island Student Success Act and help build a more inclusive and forward-looking education system for all Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service to our state.

Sincerely,

Andrew Bramson

Andrew Bramson
President and CEO