



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT

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**Testimony Re: House Bill 6139, An Act Relating to Education --
Rhode Island Promise Scholarship
House Finance Committee
May 1, 2025
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Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We would also like to thank Representative Azzinaro for sponsoring this important legislation and Representatives Fellela, Diaz, O'Brien, Noret, Corvese, Casimiro, Kazarian, and Kennedy for co-sponsoring. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its support for House Bill 6139 which would make students in workforce-ready certificate programs at the Community College of Rhode Island eligible to receive the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship.

Between 2021 and 2031, jobs requiring a postsecondary degree or certificate are projected to grow faster than jobs requiring less education.

The Rhode Island Promise Scholarship has made college more affordable and accessible to students by allowing high school graduates or those who earned their High School Equivalency Diploma to attend CCRI for two years for free. Making the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship Program available to students pursuing an accredited certificate would allow our state to continue to make progress by ensuring that our young people have the financial resources they need to successfully complete a postsecondary degree or certificate program, which will help them find employment to provide a family-sustaining wage.

Our state's economic success depends on a highly educated and skilled workforce and extending eligibility for the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship program would provide greater access to higher education and support the diverse needs of students in Rhode Island.

We thank the General Assembly for their continued investment in increasing the economic prosperity of our state by increasing postsecondary attainment rates, and for responding to the needs of Rhode Islanders. We urge you to pass House Bill 6139. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.