



RHODE ISLAND  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS <sup>AFT</sup><sub>AFL-CIO</sub>

To: House Finance Committee  
From: James Parisi, Field Representative  
Date: May 6, 2025  
Re: **Revenue for Rhode Islanders**  
Testimony in **support** of 2025-H 5473 (Rep. Alzate et. al.)

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals supports Representative Alzate's bill to create a fairer income tax system that raises additional revenue to meet important needs. The bill provides a 3% increase in taxes on income over \$625,000. This would raise taxes for the top 1% of tax filers. For many years, the RIFTHP has been part of a coalition created to support a fairer tax system while raising needed state revenue. We remain thankful that Representative Alzate has taken a leadership role in this.

Unlike last year's bill, this year's version does **not** require that the additional state revenue is dedicated to K-12 education, public higher education, childcare, road and bridge repair and public transportation.

H 5473 makes our unfair tax system fairer. The wealthy pay much less in overall income in taxes than the rest of us. They can certainly afford the proposed modest 3% income tax increase that will still leave them below average in terms of overall taxes (income, sales, and property taxes) paid as a percentage of income.

We have reached the end of considerable federal spending that has come into our state. We need a long-term revenue-raising strategy to move our state forward. We must also prepare for federal budget cuts and a possible shift of costs to the state.

While spending decisions remain within the purview of the General Assembly, the RIFTHP supports this tax fairness proposal because it would permit expanded state support for programs such as:

- Meeting state funding commitments to continue the progress of fixing our outdated, unhealthy public schools
- Hiring more counselors, social workers, student assistance counselors, and school psychologists to address student social and emotional well-being
- Increasing funding to the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College and CCRI to expand programs and avoid tuition hikes, thus limiting student debt
- Revising the education funding formula to increase the state share of education spending, and to increase spending for multi-language learners

Without a new revenue stream, the initiatives listed above, and other initiatives, are out of our reach. I encourage you to embrace the idea of raising revenue by creating a better tax system and **pass H 5473**.

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