

May 12, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island House of Representatives

The Honorable Jacob Bissaillon
Chair, Senate Committee on Housing and Municipal Government
Rhode Island Senate

Dear Chairman Abney and Chairman Bissaillon:

Good evening. My name is Cindy Montoya, and I am a proud resident and alumna of Central Falls. I currently serve as the Deputy Director at Progreso Latino.

Progreso Latino was an active organizational member of the city's Community Advisory Board, which began meeting late last year. As a group, we collectively developed the proposal currently under consideration, dedicating our time, effort, and expertise to ensure it reflects the needs and aspirations of our community.

I write to express my strong support for the passage of House Bill 6255 and Senate Bill 1063. This important legislation would ensure that the City of Central Falls has full oversight of the school committee and superintendent of the Central Falls School District.

Research consistently shows that local governance leads to stronger school accountability, increased community engagement, and improved student outcomes. For instance, in 2022, after 33 years under state control, Jersey City Public Schools regained full local oversight. The New Jersey Board of Education recognized the district as "high-performing," highlighting its significant progress and the benefits of returning decision-making authority to local leaders.

At Progreso Latino, we deeply believe that empowering local leadership is essential to building a more equitable, responsive, and culturally grounded education system. Shifting governance back to the city will not only strengthen collaboration between municipal and school leadership, but also ensure that decisions reflect the voices, values, and realities of our community.

Since our founding in 1977, Progreso Latino has worked to uplift Central Falls through trust, empowerment, and service. We've seen how access to quality education transforms lives—improving health, increasing economic opportunity, and breaking cycles of poverty. When our local leaders are at the decision-making table, our students and families are better served.

I respectfully urge you to support this charter change and return local control to our community. Our families, students, and future depend on it.

Best regards,



Cindy Montoya

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