

Kevin Folan, Providence Country Day School, House Bill No. 6236, Opposition to this bill

My name is Kevin Folan and I am the Head of School at Providence Country Day School in East Providence. Thank you for the thoughtful consideration of transportation for private school students. I am writing today in opposition of Bill No. 6236 due to my own experience as a school leader and because of the multitude of parents and guardians who rely on this transportation to get their students to and from campus each day. Independent Schools, like Providence Country Day School, serve a vital role in supporting a vast array of learners in our stay. Each morning I stand outside our school buildings and I greet the dozens of students who utilize the statewide transportation system with a firm handshake and a warm smile.

While many people believe that schools like PCD only caters to the socioeconomic elite, that is simply not the case. Private schools enroll a diverse group of students and families. We are fortunate to have many families who make significant sacrifices to provide their kids with the very best education possible, in conjunction with generous financial aid awards. Over the past five years, PCD, along with many other private schools, has worked diligently to make the school as financially accessible as possible, highlighted by a tuition reduction of nearly 40% back in 2020.

Expanding the regions from 5 to 9 will incur additional costs for the state, leading to more buses on the road and potentially increasing traffic. Amid uncertainties like the Washington Bridge situation, reliable transportation is crucial for our students' safety and school attendance.

Choosing a school for a child is among the most personal, emotional decisions a parent can make, influenced by a variety of things including, but not limited to, the academic quality and supportive community it offers. The vast majority of our families have a dual-income household and the reliance on the statewide transportation system is an important factor in their school decision. But transportation isn't just a convenience; it instills valuable life skills like time management, responsibility, and social interaction in our children. While budget constraints are real, burdening innocent children and their families is not the solution.

I respectfully implore you to oppose H6236, emphasizing that this issue impacts a broader demographic than just the affluent. Your careful consideration of this matter is appreciated, and I eagerly await your decision on this critical issue.

Thank you!
Kevin



Kevin Folan

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