

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Chair Marvin Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
RI State House

Re: Support for H7011, RI Auditory Oral Program Support

Dear Chair:

We write in strong **support** of **H7011**, a Joint Resolution which appropriates funding for the Rhode Island Auditory Oral Program (RIAOP).

RIPIN is a statewide nonprofit that has helped Rhode Islanders achieve their education goals since 1991. RIPIN was founded by parents of children with disabilities, and for 35 years we have served as Rhode Island's federally designated Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC) for special education.

The Rhode Island Auditory Oral Program is a crucial statewide educational program whose mission is "To prepare children with hearing loss for an education in their community schools by providing them with the tools they will need for successful inclusion and achievement while striving to empower their families with the knowledge and confidence necessary to support their children in their lifelong journeys."

As a peer-led community-based organization, we have seen firsthand the meaningful impact this program has on children and families across Rhode Island. RIPIN staff work with families who are deaf or have hearing loss and the RIAOP has been instrumental to helping both the children and families have access to the necessary supports in order to thrive.

This funding will directly support the Program's mission of supporting families who choose a spoken language modality for their children and allow it to continue delivering high-quality services that are not readily available elsewhere in the state.

RIPIN respectfully urges the Committee to consider that this funding be provided in a manner that allows for the RIAOP to continue receiving annual support beyond the 2026-2027 school year.

/s/
Sincerely,

Tara Hayes
Policy and Advocacy Manager
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