



Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children



Right from the
Start

Chairman Abney and members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to voice my support for **HB7317: An Act Relating To Education -- Rhode Island Early Educator Workforce Act**, which would continue funding for WAGE\$, which provides education-based salary supplements to center-based educators and family childcare providers working with children in an early childhood setting.

My name is Jillian Cinquantini and I am a Lead Toddler Teacher at Connecting for Children and Families. I went to community college and was fortunate to send my oldest child to attend a 4-year college. I used my original 5k per 6 months check to pay off his tuition, as I was not approved for loans and couldn't financially handle it. Unfortunately, for this semester, he had to take a leave of absence because we could not afford it any longer. However, we were able to use the newer, smaller grant to continue part-time classes from home.

I was able to sustain this continuous cycle of education in my life and remain productive at home. This allowed me to focus and reallocate any additional funds to my family and other needs. I have not received a raise at work in over 3 years. It's been tough, but this program lets me bypass that and keep up the good work. This program and programs alike are crucial to keeping up with equitable wages for all.

Sincerely,

Jillian Cinquantini