



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 Julie Bentely, and I am a Toddler Teacher at Tender Hearts Child Care and Learning Center. This wage helps us, because we don't get paid nearly enough for what we deal with and our role as teachers. Most of us do this work for the children and deal with the pay. Because they are what is most important. Watching them grow and being able to financially help them grow as well.

Daycare/preschool is more than babysitting and playing all day; we have these children for 9 hours a day, teach and mold their little minds, and deal with many challenges. We make sure they hit all their milestones and assess throughout the day. You need patience, and many teachers don't have that. But this is a good incentive to keep teachers in the workforce.

Sincerely,

Julie Bentley