



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 Lauren St. Jean, and I am a Teacher at My Learning Tree. Because of this supplement, I was able to pay a bill I had been struggling with, so I am now caught up on that. It's very helpful, and for some people, it's a life-changer. I cannot afford to further my education, so continuing this program would help me do that.

The money may seem minuscule, but to some people, it's changing their lives and shows some appreciation for the very hard work we all do.

Sincerely,

Lauren St. Jean