



**Testimony in Support**  
**The Education Equity And Property Tax Relief Act**  
***April 28, 2026***

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H7454. The Latino Policy Institute (LPI) supports this legislation because it strengthens Rhode Island's school funding formula by improving how the state identifies students experiencing poverty, ensuring that state investments are more accurately aligned with student needs.

This bill allows Medicaid enrollment to be included in the student success factor beginning in FY 2027. This is a fiscally responsible and data-informed improvement. Current proxies, such as SNAP participation, do not capture the full scope of low-income students and can result in undercounting needs. Medicaid provides a broader and more reliable measure, allowing the state to better target resources without creating new administrative burdens.

For this Committee, the key consideration is not only equity but efficiency and accuracy in state spending. When students are underidentified, districts receive insufficient resources to meet real needs, often resulting in downstream costs: increased remediation, greater reliance on intervention services, and widening achievement gaps that are more expensive to address over time.

This issue disproportionately impacts Latino students and multilingual learners, who are more likely to experience economic barriers. When funding does not reflect actual need, districts face constraints in providing language services, academic supports, and wraparound interventions that are essential for student success and long-term economic mobility.

Rhode Island's funding formula was designed to allocate resources based on need. The student success factor currently set at 40% of the core instruction amount for students in poverty reflects that intent. However, the effectiveness of this investment depends on accurately identifying eligible students.

H7454 strengthens the integrity of the formula by using existing data systems to improve precision in funding allocation. It also aligns with broader state efforts to enhance interagency data coordination, making this a practical and cost-effective policy adjustment.

In a constrained fiscal environment, ensuring that every education dollar is targeted effectively is critical. This bill helps Rhode Island do exactly that by directing resources where they are most needed and where they will have the greatest impact. For these reasons, LPI respectfully urges the Committee to support H-7454. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
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Senior Policy & Research Manager  
Latino Policy Institute