

Dear committee members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Mason Colon, I am a 9th grader at PCTA and a youth at Young Voices, an afterschool program in Providence, RI. I am here today in support of H7456 which would require all public schools in grades Kindergarten through twelve(K-12), to have at least one full time certified social worker for every 150 students, also giving them \$2,000,000.

The bill is really important to me because I went through a very bad route that was due to my mental health. Many people harm themselves everyday or have bad thoughts, and they don't always have access to the resources they need to get better.

We need to pass this bill because it can save countless priceless lives in Rhode Island. It can possibly improve test scores or grades of students, by making sure everyone feels safe in school and can focus on studying.

Please pass bill H7456 to make schools a better place for all students and save the lives of those struggling with mental health concerns.

Thank you for your time and attention today.

Mason Colon