

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Oscar Diaz Ramirez, I am a 9th grader at Classical High School and a youth at Young Voices, an afterschool program in Providence, RI. I am here today in support of H7501 which would provide 100k to support mental health in out-of-school time/after school programs.

The bill is really important to me because I have almost nothing to do after school and I'd rather not be at home by myself. Sports and some clubs already have cliques which are hard for me to try and fit in with them. Having something like a specific program which I actively like will allow me to have a place where I can be myself.

We need to pass this bill because students who aren't in sports need to be able to have a space to go and be themselves and socialize. Even without school programs, out of school programs can provide students with a safe space and a chance to encourage participation. Communities can come together and become closer since the younger generation tends to shut themselves in.

Bill H7501 should get passed because it'll allow students to socialize more. If not it'll still be able to create possible opportunities for future students to be able to participate and have fun.

Thank you for your time

Oscar Diaz Ramirez