

Chris O'Brien

From: Cathy Saunders <csaunders@Preserveri.org>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 9:33 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Please Support H7581

Categories: Blue category

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Dear Members of the Finance Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Lippitt House Museum to advocate for the passage of **H7581, The Education Equity & Tax Relief Act.**

Civic education is at the core of Lippitt House Museum's vision and mission. We recognize that a thriving community requires people having the tools to be active participants in civil life. It is for this reason that Lippitt House Museum is a member of the RI Civic Learning Coalition and a supporter of H7581.

As a history museum, a recurring theme is the variety of ways people that people engage civically. We share examples of political engagement like signing petitions and running for office. We talk about the role of charity work. We tell how Mary Ann Balch Lippitt advocated for own daughter's education, which led her to establish the RI School for the Deaf.

Each of these stories connects with ways that people can and do engage in their own community today. Each also illustrates the importance of understanding basic history, rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the tools of democracy in order to be able to take effective action.

While our constituents are primarily adults, Lippitt House Museum supported the 2021 Civics Literacy Act because K-12 education plays a critical role in developing civically informed adults. Furthermore, Lippitt House Museum provides a Civics Program for adult English Language Learners who are on the path to citizenship, and we find that many have children in the educational system and have been relying on their children to inform them of RI history.

The state needs to ensure that students of all backgrounds, not just those in districts that already have the most resources, can afford high-quality civics. H7581 would achieve that.

Let's make sure every child in Rhode Island has the opportunity to become a lifelong, engaged citizen.

Sincerely,

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Cathy Saunders  
Director  
Lippitt House Museum, a property of Preserve RI  
199 Hope Street  
Providence, RI 02906  
[LippittHouse.org](http://LippittHouse.org)

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[csaunders@PreserveRI.org](mailto:csaunders@PreserveRI.org)

(401) 490-0289

