



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America®

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

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April 27, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chair, House Committee on Finance  
State of Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

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**RE: H 7582: An Act Relating to Education – Health and Safety of Pupils,  
School Air Quality**

Dear Chairman Abney:

My name is Jan Hanson and I am President of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter, (AAFA New England). AAFA New England serves all six New England states and has been doing so since 1979. I am writing today on behalf of AAFA New England to offer its strong support of **H 7582** currently under review by the House Committee on Finance.

Indoor air quality and ventilation issues are the cause of numerous health concerns in public schools, including asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Asthma is a chronic disease that causes a person's airways to become inflamed, making it very difficult to breathe and is the number one chronic illness for children.

Schools are often older in their construction and have structural issues that create environmental hazards such as mold, mildew, pests, poor ventilation, old heating and cooling systems, for example. Research has proven that these are environmental triggers for asthma and may cause the exacerbation and even the development of asthma for sensitive individuals.

Asthma episodes are the leading cause for missed school days for students struggling with asthma and other respiratory illnesses, negatively affect school performance, and often lead to emergency department visits and hospitalizations. Our children with asthma are vulnerable and their health is at risk when schools have poor indoor air quality.

Reducing or eliminating exposure to these environmental irritants that directly affect health and learning is needed to achieve both improved indoor air quality in public schools in Rhode Island and better asthma outcomes for our students with asthma.

The good news: Evidence-based data, including from the CDC, informs us that reducing environmental triggers that significantly contribute to poor air quality will create safer and healthier environments and better health outcomes for individuals living with asthma, and may prevent asthma from ever developing.

**H 7582** presents a clear and evidence-based strategy to improve indoor air quality in public schools in Rhode Island so that our school-aged children with asthma will have access to much needed healthy learning environments. RI DPH-established guidelines for indoor air quality in schools and recommendations for environmental thresholds and rates for environmental triggers that directly affect health and learning, in conjunction with inspections and evaluations of indoor air quality at school conducted by the Department of Education School Building Authority, is a reasonable, actionable and necessary framework to remediate poor indoor air quality at school.

AAFA New England strongly supports **H 7582** which, if passed, will allow for appropriate and coordinated measures to be taken to improve indoor air quality in public schools in Rhode Island, and significantly reduce the rate of asthma symptoms and flares for all who work or learn in these environments.

**S 2872**, the companion bill to **H 7582**, sponsored by Senator DiPalma, passed the Senate floor unanimously last month.

On behalf of the students in Rhode Island schools who manage the difficult symptoms of asthma, it is our sincere hope, that the House Committee on Finance will support **H 7582** and report this bill favorably out of Committee. We thank you sincerely for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Jan Hanson, M.A.  
President, AAFA New England

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