

April 27, 2026

State of Rhode Island General Assembly
House Finance Committee
State House, 82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Subject: Support for House Bill H.7582: Ensuring Clean Indoor Air in RI Schools

Dear Chairman Abney, First Vice Chair Slater, Second Vice Chair Marszalkowski, and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Porter Culp, and I am writing in my personal capacity in support of House Bill 7582, a crucial step toward providing cleaner indoor air in schools across Rhode Island. I am a researcher and undergraduate student at Brown University. I have lived in Providence for the past 2 years.

As part of my research at the Brown University School of Public Health, I have studied the negative effects of poor indoor air quality on health and educational achievement. For our youngest community members, our students in public schools, this issue is especially pressing. Children's brains, lungs, and bodies are still developing, making them especially vulnerable to air pollution. Considering that children spend nearly 20% of their time in school, passing the provisions within House Bill 7582 is essential. The companion bill (S.2873, sponsored by Senator DiPalma) passed the Senate floor unanimously last month, with bipartisan support. The House should follow suit in ensuring healthy indoor air quality for our state's young students.

Although I did not attend primary school in Rhode Island, I can speak to the challenges of obtaining my primary education in a public school with poor air quality. I have seen my classmates get sick regularly because of outdated ventilation systems and miss school days while recovering. These challenges are especially challenging for our most vulnerable students, who already have health conditions that affect their respiratory function. From my own experience with asthma, I know how important it is to breathe clean, healthy air to prevent a sudden fit of wheezing. Students cannot achieve their full potential in an environment like that, which is why House Bill 7582 must be passed.

Students should not have to choose between their education and the health of their lungs. Indoor air quality is a fundamental health and learning issue. By passing House Bill 7582, Rhode Island has an opportunity to take meaningful steps to protect students' health. I urge you to support this bill and prioritize clean indoor air in schools.

Sincerely,

Porter Culp
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