



Testimony in Support of H8351 – The Rhode Island Education Funding and Accountability Act

April 28, 2026

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for **H 8351**, the Rhode Island Education Funding and Accountability Act. I had the privilege of serving as a member of the Blue Ribbon Commission, a diverse group of education and community leaders convened by the Rhode Island Foundation and guided by the Annenberg Institute at Brown University.

Over the course of more than a year, our Commission worked to develop a consensus set of recommendations for a fair, equitable, and adequate school funding system for Rhode Island. The legislation before you reflects those recommendations. My participation in the Commission was motivated by a deep belief that our current system does not yet adequately or equitably support our students. This process allowed me to see firsthand how we can bridge differences to prioritize the needs of Rhode Island's children.

This legislation offers a path forward through four interconnected shifts. It accounts for the full cost of education while tailoring funding more directly to students with the greatest needs, such as multilingual learners, differently abled students, and those who are economically disadvantaged. Furthermore, it ensures greater predictability for municipalities and introduces robust accountability measures to tie spending to educational outcomes.

I want to emphasize that these recommendations are the product of a rigorous, inclusive process involving youth working groups, national experts, and dozens of stakeholder interviews. While we did not agree on every detail initially, we arrived at a consensus vision that I am proud to stand behind.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape how Rhode Island funds its public schools. Our students and communities cannot afford to wait for a system that is fair, transparent, and effective for every child. **I respectfully urge the members of this committee to move this legislation forward.**

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation and for your continued service to our state.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CDeltito-Sharrott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line at the end.

Chiara Deltito-Sharrott
Member, Blue Ribbon Commission on Education Funding