



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

April 28, 2026

To: House Finance Committee

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Charter Public Schools, I am writing to express our strong support for **H 8351**, the Rhode Island Education Funding and Accountability Act. This legislation represents a long-overdue evolution of our funding formula, moving toward a system that more accurately reflects the full costs of modern education while ensuring a more equitable distribution of responsibility across the state.

Central to our support is the fact that this bill shifts the fiscal burden of public education more equitably across the state and its various districts. By centralizing unpredictable, high-cost expenses—such as high-cost special education—at the state level, we move away from a fragmented system and toward a collective investment. We believe this shift will significantly alleviate the tension between different public school models, allowing all of us to focus on our shared mission rather than competing for limited local resources.

We appreciate that H 8351 was designed with a "student-first" philosophy: regardless of which public school model a family selects, the student will receive adequate financial support at a level that is both fair and sustainable. This ensures that the quality of a child's education is not dictated by the governance structure of their school, but by their individual needs.

This legislation is the result of a rigorous, year-long consensus-building process. It creates the predictable and transparent environment that all Rhode Island public schools need to thrive. We urge the Committee to pass **H 8351** and provide our schools with the framework necessary to deliver high-quality education to every child in our state.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to the students of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren K. B. Matlach".

Lauren K. B. Matlach  
Deputy Director, Rhode Island League of Charter Public Schools