

April 28, 2026

Testimony from Mark Reynolds in Support of H8476

Marvin L. Abney
Chairman, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am a resident of the Town of Richmond and serve as Vice President of the Richmond Town Council. I am writing to provide testimony in support of H8476, a Joint Resolution to restore education aid to Richmond that was reduced in the Governor's proposed budget. The Governor's proposed budget provides the Town of Richmond with approximately \$331,000 less in education aid than was provided in the current FY 2026 budget. This was a shocking development because Richmond's demographics and population has not changed significantly from last year. I am unsure how the Governor's budget justifies a cut in Richmond's aid in light of this and the increased costs associated with education. This resolution will restore Richmond's state education aid to last year's level.

The loss of this aid would result in a double hit to Richmond's taxpayers. In addition to funding increased costs reflected in Charinho's budget that was recently adopted by voters, the town must also find funding to make up for this reduced state aid. Undoubtedly this burden will fall mostly on Richmond's property taxpayers. The town will also need to reduce the municipal side of the budget by reducing/eliminating pay increases for town employees, eliminating positions and deferring much needed capital expenditures for infrastructure and equipment. The restoration of state aid will reduce the burden on taxpayers and allow the town to continue to invest in its employees and capital needs.

Although \$331,000 is a small sum compared to the total state budget, restoring that amount to the Town of Richmond will have a meaningful positive impact on Richmond's taxpayers. Therefore, I urge you to recommend passage of Joint Resolution H8476 to bring Richmond's state aid to education to the same level as was allocated in the current year's budget. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark T. Reynolds
Vice President Richmond Town Council