



**RHODE ISLAND
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS** AFT
AFL - CIO

To: House Finance Committee
 From: Jeremy Sencer, RIFTHP Field Representative
 Date: May 7, 2026
 Re: Revenue Fairness and Public Investment
 Testimony in **Support of H 7313** (Alzate, et al.)

On behalf of RIFTHP, I submit testimony in support of H 7313, legislation that ensures Rhode Island can make the sustained public investments needed to support students, educators, and working families by adopting a more equitable tax structure.

Rhode Island is facing increasing pressure across multiple critical areas, including public education, healthcare, housing, and essential public services. Working families are navigating rising costs while relying on these systems every day. At the same time, Rhode Islanders increasingly feel they are paying more through fees, property taxes, and everyday costs while still struggling to access the public services and infrastructure they deserve. These realities reflect a tax structure that asks too much of working families while asking comparatively less of those at the very top of the income scale.

For decades, Rhode Island has steadily reduced taxes on the highest earners while shifting more of the overall tax burden onto working people. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, the lowest-income Rhode Islanders pay a significantly larger share of their income in total state and local taxes than the top one percent. This is not only inequitable, but it also undermines the state’s ability to make stable long-term investments in education, healthcare, housing, and public services.

H 7313 is a straightforward and responsible step toward addressing that imbalance. By applying a modest additional tax only to the highest-income earners—those at the very top of the income scale—the bill ensures Rhode Island can generate needed revenue without placing additional strain on working families. Importantly, the proposal applies only to taxable income above the threshold amount, after deductions and exemptions are applied.

For RIFTHP members, the consequences of chronic underinvestment are visible every day in Rhode Island schools and public services. Educators and school staff continue to face staffing shortages, increased student behavioral and mental health needs, aging facilities, and insufficient support resources. Communities cannot continue expecting schools and public institutions to meet growing demands without stable and equitable revenue sources.

Strong public schools, healthcare systems, and public services require sustainable investment. These systems are interconnected—students cannot succeed without stable housing, communities cannot thrive without access to healthcare, and public services depend on a stable and supported workforce. A fairer revenue system would help Rhode Island meet these needs while creating a stronger foundation for long-term economic stability and growth.

For these reasons, RIFTHP urges the Committee to support H 7313.

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