



6/2/2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chairman, House Finance Committee  
State of Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H8603

Chairman Abney and members of the House Finance Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of H8603, which would provide free drivers education classes at the community college of Rhode Island for foster and adoptive families.

FSRI is a behavioral health and social service organization with the mission “to advance hope and opportunity in our communities.” We have been serving Rhode Island children, families and communities for over a century, including programming to support healthy child development, to provide essential behavioral health services, and to coordinate crisis intervention programs that help children and families thrive. FSRI is a provider of residential, foster care, and community-based services under contract with DCYF. This includes five trauma-informed residential programs for youth and young adults, a treatment foster care program, a kinship support program, and a variety of community-based supports. We are also one of the state’s five Family Care Community Partnerships (FCCPs).

Providing free driver’s education to foster and adoptive families is a practical and meaningful way to remove barriers to opportunity for youth who already face significant challenges. Reliable access to driver’s education not only promotes safety and responsibility but is often a critical step toward employment, education, and independence- outcomes that are especially important for young people transitioning out of the child welfare system. Foster and adoptive families frequently shoulder additional financial responsibilities, and the cost of driver’s education can be a real obstacle. By ensuring these classes are available at no cost, this bill would support caregivers, expand access to essential life skills, and help level the playing field for vulnerable youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support H8603. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or follow-up.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Margaret Holland McDuff'.

Margaret Holland McDuff  
CEO