

June 2, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for H8603 – Driver Education Fee Waivers for Youth in Foster Care

Dear Chairman Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families (RICCF), we write in support of **H8603**, which would waive Community College of Rhode Island driver education fees for youth receiving foster care services.

This legislation addresses a practical but significant barrier facing many young people in foster care as they prepare for adulthood. A driver's license is often essential to securing employment, participating in educational opportunities, attending medical and behavioral health appointments, and maintaining connections with family and community supports. Yet the cost of driver education can place this important milestone out of reach for many youth in care.

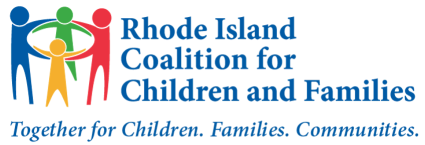
Young people involved with the child welfare system frequently face additional challenges as they transition to adulthood. Unlike many of their peers, they may have limited financial resources and fewer family supports available to help cover expenses associated with obtaining a driver's license. Eliminating driver education fees is a modest investment that can have a meaningful impact on a young person's ability to achieve independence and long-term stability.

Research consistently demonstrates that youth who age out of foster care face higher rates of unemployment, housing instability, and economic hardship.¹ Policies that remove barriers to employment and transportation help improve outcomes and strengthen opportunities for successful transitions to adulthood.

H8603 represents a practical, cost-effective step that promotes equity for young people in foster care and supports the state's broader goals of preparing youth for independence. By removing this financial obstacle, Rhode Island can help ensure that foster youth have access to the same opportunities for mobility, employment, and self-sufficiency as their peers.

RICCF respectfully urges the Committee to give H8603 favorable consideration.

¹ Dworsky A, Napolitano L, Courtney M. [Homelessness during the transition from foster care to adulthood](#). Am J Public Health. 2013 Dec.



Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to Rhode Island's children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Tanja Kubas-Meyer".

Tanja Kubas-Meyer
Executive Director
Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families