



State of Rhode Island
Office of the General Treasurer
State House – Room 102
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Seth Magaziner
General Treasurer

February 17, 2022

Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance

Re: In support of H7125- An Act Relating to Capital Development Programs for Education – Statewide Referendum

Dear Chair Abney,

I write to express my support for H7125, legislation that continues the success of the statewide school construction program to make every Rhode Island school warm, safe, dry and equipped for 21st century learning. Modern school facilities are vital to preparing students to succeed in our economy and to maintain Rhode Island's competitiveness in the region and the country.

In 2018, when I co-chaired the Rhode Island School Building Task Force, we put forward a plan to make a once-in-a-generation investment in our public school infrastructure – and we passed it with this Committee's support. Since the passage of the school construction plan, there has been \$1.75 billion in approvals to repair or replace 189 school buildings in 28 districts across the state. This is benefitting over 100,000 students annually and creating over 28,000 jobs.

But there is still work to do to improve learning environments for students across Rhode Island. Thousands of students attend schools that are old, unsafe, and poorly equipped. Communities continue to bring forward projects to address these deficiencies.

H7125 lays out the 2022 school construction plan, which proposes a \$300 million bond for public school buildings. The plan continues incentives for health and safety improvements and for educational enhancements like career and technical education, pre-K and STEAM learning; new incentives for employing local and minority-owned vendors; and significant incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements to help the state achieve a net-zero emission economy that aligns with Act on Climate goals. These incentives make it attractive for cities and towns to invest in school buildings now.

We must continue our momentum and invest in school buildings so that all Rhode Island children are safe in school and prepared to thrive in the years that follow. I urge you to include this plan in the final FY2023 budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Seth Magaziner".

Seth Magaziner
General Treasurer

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the House
Honorable Brandon C. Potter