

**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF
ELECTRICAL WORKERS**



LOCAL 99

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February 17, 2022

Hon. Marvin L. Abney
Chairman, House Finance Committee
c/o HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov
State House
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: SUPPORT OF H-7125 AN ACT CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATION --
STATEWIDE REFERENDUM**

Dear Chairman Abney,

As Business Manager of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 99, I represent 800 Women and Men who provide their skills for our now seventy-three signatory contractors in the Electrical Industry in the State of Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts. We are also more often than not, one of the very few or even the only voice for the unrepresented professional electricians in the state of Rhode Island.

On behalf of all the people I represent, I urge passage of H-7125.

Being in the electrical industry for nearly all of my life, I have had the opportunity to work in countless schools in the state of Rhode Island. I also, of course, was a student myself in what, I guess it is time to admit, was a very long time ago.

It is indisputable that the condition of the schools in Rhode Island are less than ideal. It is not a secret as to why when you consider the average age of school buildings in the United States is 42 years old. In Rhode Island, the average age of school buildings is 56 years old.

It is also indisputable that the learning environment has a direct impact on the success of the student. Having children and young adults attempting to advance their knowledge in classrooms that are overheating or unusually cool or have leaking roofs and floors in disrepair is detrimental to the success of the student. All of this provides a "we have other priorities" atmosphere. Even though I have no children myself, I have witnessed to lack of interest in the children's faces in many of the schools in Rhode Island.

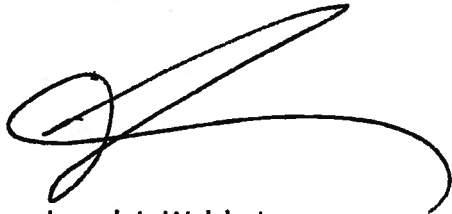
Whereas I believe we can also all agree that we are at a critical point to invest in the future of this Nation through the education of our young people, what better time could there be to not

only provide a warm, safe, and dry environment but also one that is healthy for the student, the teacher, and mother Earth.

These necessary improvements to our educational facilities will certainly have an attractive return on investment in the shape of significant utility savings but, equally as important, in the investment return in the form of more productive and successful students. That is difficult to quantify but we all know from our own experience in our own work environments that when we feel disrespected, afraid, or uncomfortable with the conditions of our workspace, our production drops dramatically. Why would we ever think our young folks would have any better results?

In conclusion, we urge **passage of H-7125** to build better world for our children and set them on a path of amazing accomplishments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Joseph L. Walsh, Jr.

cc: HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov
Committee Members
RI AFL-CIO
Paul Macdonald / IBEW Local 99 Lobbyist
Rhode Island and Construction Trades Council
BuildRI