

March 23, 2021  
**House Bill; 5699**

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Donna Coderre and I am the principal of Leo A. Savoie Elementary School in Woonsocket. A diverse community indeed! I am writing in support of Bill 5699 that would provide additional funding for people of color trying to receive their graduate degree in education.

We all realize how crazy the world has become over the last 12 months and racial divides have never been more obvious. During these unpredictable times, as well as day in and day out, I see many struggles in my community and school.

The student population is more and more diverse but the teaching population is not! We work hard to honor and relate to our students but the bottom line is, we don't walk in their shoes. Having teachers of color is vital to our understanding, our educating, and our providing the best possible outcomes for all our students. I can't think of a better way to begin this inequity than to provide opportunities for colored students to receive affordable education from a reputable program that will not only benefit them, but our students.

I truly hope that we are able to pass this bill and provide an opportunity for our students to have educators in front of them that they can relate to and that will give them the hope and desire they need to motivate and inspire their dreams into reality.

I thank you in advance for your time and consideration for Bill 5699.

Much appreciation and respect,

Donna Coderre  
Principal  
Leo Savoie Elementary