



Family Court of the State of Rhode Island
One Dorrance Plaza
Providence, RI 02903

MICHAEL B. FORTE
CHIEF JUDGE

March 31, 2025

Representative Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
RI State House
Providence, R.I. 02903

Re: 2025-H 6064

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I write to comment on 2025-H 6064, bill entitled *STATE IDENTIFICATION CARDS FOR MINORS WITHOUT RESIDENCE ACT*. This bill would facilitate the acquisition of state identification cards for Rhode Island residents, aged 14-17 who are without a permanent residence, including those minors who are in the care of DCYF and those minors who are in shelter care. No fees would be required of these minors. Additionally, minors who are at least sixteen (16) who do not have a residence or are in the custody of DCYF may receive a copy of his/her birth certificate without the signature of the child's parent, guardian or foster parent.

The importance of a driver's license, birth certificate or State ID card cannot be underestimated. The adolescents and young adults who this bill seeks to assist are least likely to get a driver's license. Additionally, an 18 year old would need a State ID card or birth certificate to apply for Medicaid, food stamps, homeless assistance through the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and various federally-funded workforce training programs. These are just a few of the benefits that require official identification.

Accordingly, the Court supports this bill as a necessary tool to ease the transition of foster youth towards independence.

Very truly yours,

Michael B. Forte
Chief Judge

MBF:nmp