



RHODE ISLAND  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AFT  
AFL - CIO

To: House Judiciary Committee  
From: Jeremy Sencer, Field Representative  
Date: February 10, 2026  
Re: **Threats Against School Officials**  
Testimony in **support** of 2026-H 7552 (Representative Noret, et.al.)

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFTHP) supports H 7552, which would extend legal protection to school employees under the existing statute that criminalizes threats against public officials. RIFTHP has supported similar legislation in previous sessions.

The bill amends the definition of "public official" to include school superintendents, central office officials, school principals, and all other school employees. This change ensures that educators and school staff are afforded the same legal status and safeguards as other public officials when faced with serious threats of violence.

The legislation is carefully crafted to ensure it applies only in serious cases. A person must knowingly and willfully convey a verbal or written threat to take the life of, or to inflict bodily harm upon, a school employee or their immediate family. Furthermore, individuals may only be charged under this section if they are eighteen years of age or older, appropriately excluding students from unnecessary criminalization.

By providing prosecutors with a tool to address these grave threats, H 7552 offers a strong deterrent and a meaningful layer of protection for those who serve our schools every day. The bill promotes the safety and well-being of Rhode Island's educators and reinforces the state's commitment to safe learning environments.

The RIFTHP urges support of the legislation.

---

356 SMITH STREET PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02908-3761 (401) 273-9800 FAX (401) 331-8815

---

• **Maribeth K. Calabro**, President • **Maria Manzi**, Executive Assistant • **Bridget McDonough**, Administrative Assistant •  
• **Michael J. Mullane**, Field Representative • **James A. Parisi**, Field Representative •  
• **Christopher Lambert**, Field Representative • **Jeremy Sencer**, Field Representative •  
• **Sean Doyle**, Field Representative •