



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

MICHAEL B. FORTE  
CHIEF JUDGE

April 16, 2026

Representative Carol Hagan McEntee  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
RI State House  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: 2026 H-8056**

Dear Chair McEntee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to comment on **2026 H 8056** entitled "An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Children." This bill requires the arrest of any person who is charged with a crime involving cruelty or neglect of a child to be incarcerated until he or she can be brought before the Court or a bail commissioner. The Court is then required to issue an immediate NO CONTACT order upon the release of the accused.

While the Court respects the intent of this bill to immediately protect children, its mandatory nature may interfere with ongoing reunification efforts at the Department of Children, Youth and Families and those under the jurisdiction of the Family Court.

The Court respectfully asks that this bill be held for further study, and thanks the Committee for this opportunity to comment on this proposed legislation.

Very truly yours,

Michael B. Forte  
Chief Judge

MBF:nmp