



April 16, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: In Support of H8099 – State Identification Cards for Minors Without Residence

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Members of the Committee:

We are grateful to the bill sponsors for introducing this important legislation to address the need for identification for youth without permanent residence, including those involved with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and those experiencing homelessness.

The Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families (RICCF) is composed of member organizations that provide and advocate for a broad range of services, including behavioral health, education, juvenile justice, housing, and family support programs. Across these systems, we consistently see how lack of identification creates unnecessary barriers for young people working toward stability and independence.

Identification is a basic need. Youth without permanent residence or with frequent placement changes face unique challenges in obtaining it. Providers report that young people in residential programs, independent living, and extended care often cannot cash paychecks due to lack of ID, forcing them to rely on others or turn to costly alternatives like payday lenders. Many are also unable to obtain driver's licenses due to insurance barriers, leaving them without a viable pathway to secure identification.

This legislation would help remove these barriers and provide youth with a critical tool for accessing employment, financial services, housing, and other essential supports. Expanding access to identification is a practical and meaningful step toward promoting independence and long-term stability for vulnerable youth.

Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully urge your support of H-8099.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanja Kubas Meyer".

Tanja Kubas Meyer
Executive Director
Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families