



March 18, 2026

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese
Chair, House Committee on Labor
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 8248

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of NEARI, I write in strong support of H 8248 establishing prevailing wage and benefit standards and oversight for teachers and administrators working in charter public schools and mayoral academies.

Educators in charter schools and mayoral academies perform the same life-changing work as their colleagues in district public schools. They teach the students from across Rhode Island, meet the same state standards, and are responsible for the outcomes that shape the futures of Rhode Island's children. Regardless of whether those educators are members of a union, we believe strongly that all teachers and school administrators deserve fair compensation and benefits that reflect the value of their work and the professional expectations placed upon them.

This legislation takes an important step toward ensuring greater transparency and accountability around compensation practices in charter public schools. By directing the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to determine and publish prevailing wage and benefit rates, monitor compliance, and investigate complaints, the bill creates a clear framework to ensure that charter school educators are treated fairly and that compensation practices are consistent with those of the broader public education workforce.

Providing equitable compensation standards also helps strengthen the overall stability and quality of Rhode Island's education system. When educators are fairly compensated, schools are better able to recruit and retain talented professionals who are committed to supporting student learning and success. Establishing clear expectations around wages and benefits helps ensure that innovation in school governance does not come at the expense of the educators who make that innovation possible.

Educators in every public school setting—district schools, charter schools, and mayoral academies—play a critical role in shaping the academic and personal development of Rhode Island's students. Ensuring that these professionals receive fair wages and benefits reflects our shared commitment to valuing the teaching profession and maintaining a strong, stable education workforce.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alexander Lucini".

Alexander Lucini
Government Relations Director, NEARI