



State of Rhode Island

Department of State | Office of the Secretary of State

Gregg M. Amore, Secretary of State

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chair
House Committee on State Government and Elections

RE: In support of HJR5459 - Joint Resolution to Approve, Publish and Submit to the Electors
a Proposition of Amendment to the Constitution – Right to an Adequate Education

Dear Chair Shanley,

I write this letter in support of House Resolution 5459, legislation that would propose an amendment to the State constitution to guarantee that all Rhode Island residents have the same opportunity to receive an equitable and adequate education.

As Secretary of State, one of my top priorities has been to expand the Department of State's civic education programming by establishing partnerships with middle and high schools across the state, including classroom visits, mock elections, and the Civic Liaison Program for students. These programs aim to encourage greater civic engagement among our state's youth. All young people deserve meaningful civic engagement opportunities that provide them with an array of civic knowledge, skills, and experiences.

As a former history and civics teacher for nearly 30 years, I am well aware of the discrepancies in our current education system, and how these inequities impact the success of students in their future careers and civic lives. A referendum to add the Right to an Adequate Education to the Constitution will both engage young voters and allow voters to express their commitment to the success of Rhode Island students - I urge the General Assembly to put this question before voters.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Arias, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at marias@sos.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State, State of Rhode Island

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on State Government and Elections
The Honorable Mary Messier