



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

Daniel J. McKee **Governor**
Kasim J. Yarn **Director**

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Samuel A. Azzinaro
Chair, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H8125 - AN ACT RELATING TO MILITARY AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE -- MILITARY CHILD ACT

Dear Chair Azzinaro:

I respectfully submit this letter for the record on behalf of the Office of Veterans Services in support of **H8125**, legislation that would define military-connected students and permit them to remotely enroll and register in Rhode Island school districts when a parent or guardian is assigned to duty in the state.

Military families transferring on orders often encounter barriers when attempting to enroll their children in school. Many districts require physical residency before allowing course registration, which can delay enrollment until weeks after a family arrives. This delay can prevent students from securing seats in required or advanced courses and places military-connected students at an immediate academic disadvantage during an already disruptive transition.

H8125 addresses this challenge by allowing military-connected students to begin the enrollment and course registration process before physically arriving in Rhode Island, while still requiring proof of residency once the family reports to the state under official military orders. Importantly, this policy does not require the creation of new systems or impose additional administrative burdens on school districts. It simply allows military families to access existing enrollment processes in advance of their move.

While many Rhode Island districts near military installations already accommodate military families, the practice is informal and inconsistent. H8125 would establish a clear, uniform statewide policy that ensures all military families transferring to Rhode Island are treated fairly and consistently.

Rhode Island currently lags behind the rest of the country on this issue. Forty-two states—including five in New England—have already enacted policies supporting advance enrollment for military-connected students.

The Office of Veterans Services has consulted with our partners at the Rhode Island Department of Education and the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission. Both agree this legislation would meaningfully support service members and their children.

RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Our military families accept frequent moves as part of their service to our nation. The least we can do is ensure their children can transition into Rhode Island schools without unnecessary barriers.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support H8125 and stand with Rhode Island's military service members and their families.

Sincerely,



Kasim J. Yarn
Director of Veterans Services

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy