



RHODE ISLAND  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AFT  
AFL - CIO

To: Senate Education Committee  
From: Jeremy Sencer, RIFTHP Field Representative  
Date: April 8, 2026  
Re: **Student Device Privacy**  
Testimony in **Support** of S 2786 (Valverde, et al.)

Chairperson and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFTHP), I submit testimony in support of **S 2786**, legislation that establishes clear limits on how schools and third parties can access audio, video, and location data from student devices. This bill protects student privacy while maintaining appropriate flexibility for safety-related situations.

Students in Rhode Island increasingly rely on school-issued devices for learning, both in and out of the classroom. Without clear safeguards, these devices can be used in ways that unintentionally intrude on student privacy, including access to cameras, microphones, and location tracking. This raises serious concerns for students, families, and educators about how technology is used and monitored.

S 2786 addresses these concerns by prohibiting access to audio, video, and location data except in limited and clearly defined circumstances, such as emergencies or with a judicial warrant. The bill also requires transparency by ensuring that families are notified when access occurs in response to a safety concern. These protections establish clear boundaries while allowing schools to respond appropriately to urgent situations.

From our experience in schools, maintaining trust between students, families, and educators is essential. Clear privacy protections help ensure that technology is used as a tool for learning, not surveillance, and support a safe and respectful learning environment. Establishing consistent standards statewide also helps districts navigate the use of educational technology responsibly.

For these reasons, RIFTHP urges the Committee to support S 2786.

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