



John D. Thompson

Vice President  
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Cranston, RI

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Dear Members of the Rhode Island Senate Education Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill S2787, legislation that would place a temporary pause on the creation and expansion of charter schools in Rhode Island for the 2026-2027 through 2028-2029 school years.

Public schools across Rhode Island, particularly in Cranston, continue to face significant financial strain as local districts are required to divert millions of dollars annually to charter school tuition payments. While districts are expected to maintain transportation, special education services, staffing, facilities, athletics, and programming for the overwhelming majority of students, the loss of funding to charter expansion has made it increasingly difficult to sustain these essential services.

In Cranston, the continued growth of charter schools has contributed to budget instability, larger class sizes, staffing reductions, deferred maintenance, and difficult decisions impacting students and educators alike. Public schools are asked to do more with less each year while fixed operational costs remain. A temporary moratorium on charter expansion would provide communities with much-needed financial stability and allow the state time to evaluate the long-term impact charter growth has had on traditional public school districts.

Senate Bill S2787 does not eliminate charter schools currently in operation; rather, it establishes a responsible pause so Rhode Island can reassess educational funding priorities and ensure all students have equitable access to strong public schools.

At this critical time, Rhode Island must prioritize strengthening neighborhood public schools that serve every child, including students with the highest academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. Supporting S2787 is an important step toward preserving financial stability and educational opportunities for students in Cranston and throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Rhode Island's students and public schools.

Sincerely,

John Thompson