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To: [SLegislation](#)
Subject: Opposition to SB2787
Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 12:36:17 PM

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Dear Senators,

My name is Joshua Laplante, and I come before you today as a Rhode Island educator, school and district leader, former school committee member, parent, and advocate for educational opportunity. I have taught in private schools, urban district schools, and independent charter public schools. I have also been a parent in our local district schools, a district CTE program, and a charter public school. My perspective is grounded in classroom and governance experience—and those experiences have taught me one truth: **no single school model is right for every child.**

That is why I urge you to oppose SB2787.

Rhode Island's own data makes the case. In November 2025, the Rhode Island Department of Education reported that in our urban core districts, **55% of open enrollment middle schools are one-star schools, and an alarming 88% of open enrollment high school seats are in one-star schools.** For too many families—these are the default options.

Most charter public schools are producing a different result. **Nearly 48% of charter school seats are in schools rated three stars or higher, while only 5.7% are in one-star schools.** Nationally, the 2023 CREDO study at Stanford University found that Rhode Island charter school students gained the equivalent of **an additional half year of learning in both reading and math each year** compared to their peers in traditional public schools.

And importantly—charter schools are serving the students who need opportunity most. According to Rhode Island Kids Count, **86% of charter school students are students of color, 62% identify as Hispanic, 26% are multilingual learners—well above the state average—and 15% receive special education services, nearly matching statewide enrollment.** These are not exclusive schools. They are public schools serving diverse, high-need communities.

Meanwhile, multilingual learners continue to face profound inequities. Only **72% graduate in four years**, compared to **86% statewide.** Their dropout rate is **17%—more than double the state average.** And only **38% enroll in postsecondary education**, compared to **62% of Rhode Island students overall.** We cannot continue doing the same thing and expect different outcomes.

SB2787 does not solve these problems. It does the opposite. It closes the door on innovation, eliminates future high-quality charter options, and denies families access to schools intentionally designed to meet unmet needs—like De La Comunidad Bilingual Charter Public School, Rhode Island's proposed first K-12 dual language full-service community school.

At a time when families are demanding more educational options, enrollment patterns are shifting nationally, and charter public schools are demonstrating strong outcomes for underserved students, this bill sends the wrong message. It goes beyond a moratorium by reducing the number of allowable charter schools in Rhode Island, effectively preventing any future charter schools from opening, limiting opportunities for families, and overturning the approvals of schools like The Greene School and De La Comunidad Bilingual Charter Public School, both of which successfully completed a rigorous, transparent, and highly public authorization process and were granted approval based on

the merits of their applications and the outcomes they proposed for students—not the influence of special interest groups.

Do not limit opportunity. Do not close doors for families. Oppose SB2787.

Thank you.

Joshua Laplante