



**Testimony in Opposition**  
**An Act Relating To Education - Establishment Of Charter Public Schools**  
**May 13, 2026**

The Latino Policy Institute respectfully opposes S2787. Our organization works to advance equitable systems and expand opportunity for Latino communities across Rhode Island. That includes ensuring families have access to high-quality public education options that reflect the diverse needs of our students.

While this bill is framed as a temporary pause on charter school growth, its impact would be far more sweeping. The legislation would effectively freeze the approval and expansion of charter public schools for multiple years while applying restrictions that reach backward to disqualify schools currently moving through Rhode Island's established approval process. This creates significant concerns around transparency, consistency, and fairness in public education governance.

Rhode Island has developed clear processes to evaluate charter applications and expansions through academic, operational, and financial review. Schools and families engage in these processes with the expectation that decisions will be made based on merit, evidence, and student need. Altering eligibility standards after applicants have already invested substantial time and resources undermines confidence in that process and creates instability for communities seeking educational opportunity.

This is especially concerning for multilingual learners and historically underserved communities, including many Latino families, who often benefit from innovative public school models designed to meet cultural and linguistic needs that traditional systems have not always adequately addressed. Public education should evolve to meet the realities of the students it serves. Limiting pathways for innovation reduces opportunities for communities that already face persistent educational inequities.

If Rhode Island believes stronger charter accountability measures are necessary, those discussions should happen through prospective, thoughtful policymaking that strengthens oversight for all public schools. Broad restrictions that halt growth and retroactively disrupt schools already in process risk closing doors for families without addressing the deeper systemic challenges facing public education.

The Latino Policy Institute believes Rhode Island's focus should remain on expanding quality educational opportunities, strengthening accountability across all sectors, and ensuring every family has access to schools where their children can thrive. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to hold S2787 for further study. Thank you for your consideration.

Awilda Reinoso Lopez  
Latino Policy Institute