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Sent: Monday, May 11, 2026 6:03 PM

To: SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>

Subject: Support for S2787 – Charter Moratorium & Cap Reduction

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To the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Melanie Bertoldi, and I am a fifth grade teacher in Pawtucket Public Schools.

I am writing in support of S2787, the Charter Moratorium & Cap Reduction bill.

As an educator working directly with students every day, I have seen firsthand the growing pressures placed on traditional public schools while Rhode Island continues expanding a fragmented parallel school system. Public schools are expected to serve every student who walks through the door, including students with the highest academic, behavioral, emotional, and special education needs, regardless of when they arrive or what supports they require.

At the same time, districts like Pawtucket continue losing both enrollment and funding to charter expansion while still being responsible for maintaining staffing, transportation, special education services, intervention programs, and support systems for all remaining students. These enrollment shifts create significant financial instability for urban districts already facing increasing student needs and limited resources.

Rhode Island is no longer adding small-scale innovation programs. Instead, we are expanding a permanent parallel system without adequate fiscal protections for municipalities or neighborhood public schools. Innovation was the promise, but fragmentation has become the reality.

I believe this legislation offers a responsible temporary pause so Rhode Island can evaluate the long-term fiscal sustainability, educational outcomes, district stability, and equity impacts of continued charter expansion before authorizing additional growth.

The communities with the highest student needs are currently bearing the greatest fiscal burden. Public schools cannot continue absorbing rising responsibilities while simultaneously losing critical funding and resources.

I respectfully urge the committee to support S2787.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melanie Bertoldi

5th Grade Teacher

Pawtucket Public Schools