

Subject: Oppose Senate Bill 2787 – Rhode Island Families Support Public School Options

TO: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov

Samantha Bergbauer
90 Chapin Avenue, Floor 3
Providence, RI 02909
May 13, 2026

Dear Chair Gallo and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Samantha Bergbauer, and I am a community member from Providence. I am writing to respectfully urge you to oppose Senate Bill 2787.

Rhode Island voters have made it clear that they support giving families access to a range of public school options. Recent statewide polling found that 88% of voters agree it is good that families can decide which type of school best meets their child's needs. Polling also showed that a majority of voters oppose legislation that would stop the opening of new charter public schools, with support for public school options especially high among parents and Latino voters.

Despite being referred to as a "moratorium," Senate Bill 2787 would go much further by effectively preventing the future growth of charter public schools in Rhode Island. The bill is also retroactive, impacting schools already moving through the approval process, including De La Comunidad Bilingual School and the Greene School expansion.

Families across Rhode Island are looking for public schools that fit the unique needs of their children. For some students, that may be a district school. For others, it may be a charter public school with specialized academic programming, language immersion, career pathways, or a different educational model. These options should not be taken away from families.

It is a widely known fact that there is no successful "one size fits all" approach to education. The decision to limit future educational opportunities for families is NOT in the best interest of children whose voices are, unfortunately, being lost in this process. In a state where your zip code determines so much of your future, we shouldn't also force that to determine a child's educational success. Every child, regardless of where they live and what their needs are, should have access to a high quality education that meets all of their needs and for some families, the best option is a charter public school. Given the RETROACTIVE language of the bill around De La Comunidad Bilingual School and the Greene School that would inhibit them from expansion, this bill seems like it is a personal attack on those communities in particular.

I believe Rhode Island should focus on strengthening all public schools while preserving opportunities for innovation and family choice. Restricting educational opportunities will not solve the challenges facing our education system, but collaboration, accountability, and investment can.

Please oppose Senate Bill 2787 and continue supporting a public education system that values opportunity, access, and the voices of Rhode Island families.

Sincerely,

Samantha Bergbauer
Providence Resident