

From: [Tracy Dwyer](#)
To: [SLegislation](#)
Subject: Testimony in Support of S2787 – Charter School Moratorium and Cap Reduction
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Dear Members of the Senate Education Committee,

My name is Tracy Dwyer, and I am a public school teacher in Pawtucket. I am writing in strong support of S2787, legislation establishing a temporary moratorium on charter school expansion and reducing the statewide charter cap. After thirty years of unchecked charter growth, Rhode Island's public education system is being stretched beyond its limits, and the consequences are felt every day in our classrooms.

Charter expansion has created a fragmented parallel system that drains resources from the neighborhood public schools that serve the overwhelming majority of students. Pawtucket alone sends millions of dollars in tuition payments to charter schools each year—funds that could otherwise support staffing, special education services, student supports, and safe, modern learning environments. At the same time, our district faces budget shortfalls, rising class sizes, and program cuts that directly impact students.

Rhode Island now operates more than 60 separate education entities, including 24 charter LEAs, each with its own administrative and operational costs. This duplication is fiscally unsustainable for a small state with declining enrollment. While we invest heavily in rebuilding and modernizing public school facilities, we continue to divert funding into a parallel system that does not serve all students equitably.

Urban communities like Pawtucket, Providence, Central Falls, and Woonsocket bear the greatest burden. These districts continue to educate the highest-need populations while losing both students and funding to charter schools. Without fiscal guardrails—like those used in Massachusetts—our public schools cannot maintain the staffing, services, and stability our students deserve.

S2787 does not eliminate charter schools. It simply creates a necessary pause so Rhode Island can evaluate long-term fiscal sustainability, equity concerns, and the true impact of charter expansion on our communities.

I urge you to support this legislation and prioritize the health of our public school system. Our students, families, and educators cannot afford further destabilization.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Tracy Dwyer
