

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: David Lichtenstein, PhD

Date: 5/21/26

Re: Support for S-3015

My name is David Lichtenstein. I am a resident of Providence and a licensed psychologist working with autistic youth and consulting with public schools. As a parent of children in the Providence Public Schools, as well as someone working with public schools to support a variety of students, I know that we do not have educational equity in this state. I am writing to **support S-3015 to update the school funding formula.**

This bill (S-3015) would make important adjustments to the school funding formula, as recommended by Blue Ribbon Commission on Education Funding. This bill will reallocate funds in a way that strives towards greater educational equity in our state so that all children, regardless of zip code, have access to the education and educational support they need to be successful and that they deserve.

As a parent of children in PPSD, I see the daily impact of inadequate and inequitable school funding. Among a myriad of issues, kids enrolled in PPSD sometimes lack access to basic school supplies (e.g., paper, books), there is insufficient access to (short-term and long-term) substitute teachers, and extracurricular/afterschool activities often teeter on the edge of losing funding/staffing. Children with special educational needs (e.g., MLL and children with IEPs) do not have adequate access to the support they need to be successful. These types of issues are not universal across school districts, but inequitably, instead cluster among districts with a higher concentration of poverty.

As a psychologist, I see the many ways in which schools and school resources come up short – whether this is lack of behavioral and other specialists, inadequately staffed classrooms, lack of access to appropriate technology. It leads families with means to opt out of the public schools, and families without to watch as their children struggle. I believe we can do more to support our schools in the very important and challenging task of raising the next generation, and this bill would be an important step.

Thank you for reviewing my testimony and my recommendation to **support of S-3015 to update the school funding formula.**

Sincerely,

David P. Lichtenstein, PhD