

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Gene Thompson-Grove

Date: May 19, 2026

Re: S3015 THE RHODE ISLAND EDUCATION FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

I write as a Newport resident in strong support of Senate Bill 3015, which would enact the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Rhode Island's school funding formula.

Rhode Island's education funding formula has not been fundamentally updated in 15 years, and communities like Newport are feeling the consequences. Too often, the quality of a child's education depends on their zip code rather than their actual needs.

These bills would make meaningful, long-overdue improvements by funding the full cost of education, including transportation, building upkeep, and early childhood services that municipalities currently struggle to absorb on their own. For Newport, this would be a game changer.

The legislation also recognizes a simple reality: students who are economically disadvantaged, English language learners, or students with disabilities require additional support to succeed. A fair funding formula should reflect those real educational needs, not rely on outdated assumptions.

Just as importantly, I am encouraged that the proposal includes fair local contribution standards, ensuring that communities contribute based on their actual financial capacity. Newport needs the push this bill will provide to support our schools at an appropriate level, something we have not done in at least the last fifteen years.

Updating the school funding formula is not simply a budget issue — it is an investment in educational equity, community stability, and Rhode Island's future.

I respectfully urge you to support Senate Bill 3015.

Sincerely,

Gene Thomposn-Grove, 9 Champlin Place, Newport RI