

March 10, 2026

State of Rhode Island General Assembly  
House Committee on Education  
State House, 82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

**Subject: Support for Senate Bill [S2873](#): Ensuring Clean Indoor Air in Rhode Island Schools**

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Senator DiPalma, and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services,

My name is Huyen Nguyen, and I am a sophomore at Brown University studying Public Health with a strong interest in environmental health. I am writing in my personal capacity in support of Senate Bill S2873. Last summer, I had the opportunity to intern at the Brown University Pandemic Center under Dr. Georgia Lagoudas, where I worked on indoor air quality policy research. Since then, my work has continued through university initiatives focused on improving indoor air quality and through presentations at campus and academic conferences on the urgency of this issue.

Through this work, I have studied trends in indoor air quality (IAQ) legislation across the United States and helped catalog more than 50 IAQ-related bills introduced across all 50 states between 2020 and 2025. This research examined how states are addressing pollutants such as particulate matter, mold, and other airborne contaminants through ventilation standards, filtration upgrades, and air quality monitoring in schools and public buildings.

The findings show a clear trend: momentum for clean indoor air policy is growing nationwide, but progress remains uneven. In the past five years, thirteen states have enacted legislation aimed at improving indoor air quality in schools and public facilities. Many of these laws focus on practical measures such as ventilation inspections, MERV-13 filtration, and monitoring systems to ensure HVAC systems are functioning properly.

Clean indoor air is a critical public health issue because Americans spend more than 90 percent of their time indoors. Poor indoor air quality contributes to asthma, respiratory illness, absenteeism, and reduced cognitive performance in classrooms. Improving ventilation and filtration has been shown to reduce the spread of airborne disease and create healthier environments where students can focus and learn.

Improving indoor air quality is also a matter of equity. Underserved communities often face a disproportionate burden of environmental health risks, including higher asthma rates and aging school infrastructure with outdated ventilation systems. Clean indoor air should be a basic condition for learning, not a privilege determined by a school's resources or location.

Senate Bill S2873 represents an important and practical step forward for Rhode Island. By directing the Department of Health to establish indoor air quality guidance, incorporating IAQ assessments into existing school building inspections, and encouraging improved filtration and ventilation practices, this bill aligns Rhode Island with proven approaches that other states have successfully implemented.

Rhode Island has an opportunity to join a growing national movement to prioritize healthy indoor environments in schools. I respectfully urge the committee to support the passage of Senate Bill S2873.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

Huyen Nguyen

Undergraduate Student, Brown University

A.B. Public Health & Sc.B. Biochemistry and Molecular Biology