

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 Mary Claire Warren, and I am writing my personal capacity in support of Senate Bill S2873. I am an undergraduate student at Brown University, and I was an undergraduate researcher at the Brown University School of Public Health and the Brown Pandemic Center. I worked under Dr. Georgia Lagoudas, focusing on improving indoor air quality to improve human health and reduce disease transmission. This bill is a crucial step toward cleaner indoor air across Rhode Island schools which in turn contributes to improved student health and educational outcomes.

During my time at the Pandemic Center this summer, I focused my research on the return on investment of improving indoor air quality in schools. Overwhelming evidence exists which proves the initial investment in improving indoor air in schools pays off. Cleaner indoor air results in reduced absenteeism and increased academic performance which offset the initial cost needed to implement the improvements outlined in S2873.

While there remains no national set standards for indoor air quality, with this bill Rhode Island would be following a movement to set standards for cleaner indoor air. So far, twelve states have passed legislation committed to improving indoor air quality in schools specifically, and at least ten more states are developing legislation to contribute improvements this year.

This bill provides clear, actionable guidelines which would improve indoor air quality among schools and contribute to healthier, more successful outcomes among students. Upgrading filtration systems to include MERV-13 filters would reduce the prevalence of dust, mold, other allergens, bacteria, and viruses which could reduce disease transmission. Routine inspections of HVAC systems and indoor air quality are essential to ensure the maintenance and efficacy of these improvements. Similar measures have already been successfully implemented across California and Connecticut.

Indoor air quality is an issue which disproportionately affects historically marginalized populations. For example, Alvarez High School in Providence, Rhode Island, largely serves minority students. Improving indoor air quality would reduce inequities across Rhode Island in health and educational outcomes.

Clean indoor air should be a fundamental human right, and this bill takes strides toward a cleaner, healthier future. By passing S2783, Rhode Island would be prioritizing the health and educational outcomes of its students. I urge you to support this bill.

Best,

Mary Claire Warren  
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