



To: Senate Health & Human Services Committee
From: Jeremy Sencer, Field Representative
Date: March 10, 2026
Re: School Air Quality
Testimony in Support of 2026- S2873 (Senator DiPalma, et al.)

Chairperson and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFTHP), I respectfully submit testimony in support of **Senate Bill 2873**, which establishes a statewide framework for monitoring and improving indoor air quality in Rhode Island's public schools.

Indoor air quality is a critical component of safe and healthy learning environments. Students and educators spend much of their day inside school buildings, and the quality of the air they breathe directly affects respiratory health, concentration, and overall well-being. Poor ventilation and filtration can allow harmful particulates and pollutants to accumulate, increasing the risk of illness and negatively affecting learning conditions.

S2873 takes a key step toward ensuring that Rhode Island schools meet modern, science-based standards for indoor air quality. By directing the Department of Health to establish guidelines for environmental conditions—including temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide, particulate matter, ventilation, and filtration, the legislation provides clear statewide benchmarks for healthy school environments.

The bill also integrates indoor air quality assessments into Rhode Island's existing school facilities needs survey. Conducting uniform inspections of school ventilation systems and indoor air conditions at least every five years will provide reliable data on the condition of school buildings and help guide future capital investments and maintenance decisions.

Transparency is another key component of the legislation. Requiring that inspection results be made publicly available and shared with school leadership and state agencies will ensure that families, educators, and policymakers have access to important information about the conditions inside school buildings.

For educators and school staff, air quality is a daily workplace condition. For students, it is a matter of health and academic success. Ensuring that school buildings provide clean, well-ventilated air is a practical investment in student learning and public health.

For these reasons, RIFTHP respectfully urges the Committee to support **S2873**.

356 SMITH STREET PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02908-3761 (401) 273-9800 FAX (401) 331-8815

• **Maribeth K. Calabro**, President • **Maria Manzi**, Executive Assistant • **Bridget McDonough**, Administrative Assistant •
• **Michael J. Mullane**, Field Representative • **James A. Parisi**, Field Representative •
• **Christopher Lambert**, Field Representative • **Jeremy Sencer**, Field Representative •
• **Sean Doyle**, Field Representative •