



Association of Independent
Colleges & Universities of Rhode Island

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March 27, 2024

The Honorable Joseph McNamara
Chairman, House Education Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman McNamara,

On behalf of our membership, I write in opposition to House Bill 7355, which would prohibit colleges and universities from withholding transcripts due to an outstanding balance on a student's account.

Our members, along with institutions across the country, engage in this widely accepted practice for a party that is owed money by another party to deny access to goods or services due to a lack of payment.

Most transcript holds are for students currently enrolled in an institution and serve as a reminder to a student to pay a small balance on their account. Many transcript holds are attributable to students who attended less than one semester at an institution before dropping out and not paying tuition. In this case, the institutions are essentially withholding blank transcripts, as no classes were completed.

In the small number of cases where students owe large amounts and need a transcript to continue education or apply for a job, institutions are accommodating. Unofficial transcripts, which are satisfactory to most employers, are always provided to students regardless of holds.

If an official transcript is necessary to continue education, then institutions will work with the student to arrange a revised payment plan that the student can reasonably afford.

With these concerns and current processes in place to protect both students and the institutions, AICU *Rhode Island* respectfully opposes this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Egan".

Daniel P. Egan
President