



401-787-3389



janie@stopthewaitri.org



1290 Westminister St, Unit 100,
Providence RI 02909



April 10th, 2025

House Committee on Education

Rhode Island General Assembly
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairperson McNamara and Members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Janie Segui Rodriguez, and I am the Founder and CEO of Stop The Wait RI, a parent-led nonprofit organization created in response to the proposed 2021 charter school moratorium. I write today in strong opposition to House Bill 6034, which would block the growth of network charter schools and limit access to high-quality public school options for families who need them the most.

As a mother, I founded Stop The Wait RI to support families navigating the public school system and to elevate their voices in shaping the education landscape. Our organization partners with hundreds of low-income, Black and Brown families across the state, many of whom have experienced firsthand the deep inequities of a system that too often leaves their children behind. My daughter was one of them, and I'm profoundly grateful to the charter school that helped change her trajectory.

House Bill 6034 is not just a policy proposal, it is part of a slow-moving moratorium that undermines progress and restricts family agency. This bill would prohibit the approval of new charter networks and the expansion of existing ones, stripping away access to schools that are making a real difference in students' lives. In 2021, STW mobilized more than 400 parents to oppose a similar effort because we knew then what remains true now: **now is not the time to restrict opportunity—we should be expanding access to high-quality public schools, not limiting it.**

Educational opportunity should not be dictated by ZIP code. Families, especially those in low-income communities, deserve the right to choose a public school that best fits their child's needs. Charter schools are public schools. They are lifelines for many students who have struggled in traditional settings and have found success in more personalized, mission-driven environments.

Instead of limiting options, we should be focused on raising the bar for all public schools—traditional and charter alike. We should be promoting collaboration between schools to share best practices and drive continuous improvement across the system. Accountability, transparency, and quality must be shared standards, but those goals should never come at the cost of opportunity for the families who need it most.

I urge you to reject House Bill 6034 and to stand with families across Rhode Island who are demanding more, not fewer, high-quality school choices. Let's build an education system that meets every child where they are and gives every parent the power to choose what's best for their family.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

Janie Segui Rodriguez
Founder & CEO