

April 10, 2025

Chairman McNamara and Members of the House Committee on Education
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Opposition to H6034

Dear Chairman McNamara and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to H6034.

This bill does not improve quality by prohibiting the expansion of charter networks; instead, it limits the range of educational options available to Rhode Island families and educators. It restricts the ability of proven high-quality schools to grow and serve more students in communities where waitlist demand and demonstrated success are evident.

Local charter networks—developed and operated in-state—provide opportunities for operational efficiency and shared mission-aligned practices. These networks often enable successful schools to expand access while responsibly maintaining high academic outcomes. This bill would impose unnecessary restrictions and have a direct and negative impact on students in this state.

Moreover, the existing charter authorization process in Rhode Island is already rigorous and selective. Every application—whether from a standalone school or a network—is judged on merit, academic track record, community need, and fiscal responsibility. These applications are reviewed for quality and only approved after a vote by the gubernatorial-appointed Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

Rather than strengthening accountability, H6034 undermines flexibility and innovation in our public school system. It disregards the evidence-based practices of effective charter networks and limits the ability of successful schools to meet community needs.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to reject H6034. Let's maintain a public education system that supports growth where it is earned and fosters innovation that benefits Rhode Island students.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Victor F. Capellan