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May 8, 2024

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HR 8196 - Support

Dear Chair Abney,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for House Resolution 8196, which would allocate \$2,000,000 to the Elisha Project. As the Superintendent of Pawtucket Schools, I see firsthand the challenges our students and their families face, particularly regarding food insecurity. This legislation presents an opportunity to address this issue and provides significant support to an organization that directly benefits our students. In Pawtucket, students' families struggle with food insecurity throughout the year. We know that hungry students struggle to focus and learn effectively in the classroom.

What sets the Elisha Project apart is their profound impact on our students. Based in Pawtucket, they have been steadfast in combating food insecurity. By ensuring access to nutritious meals, the project directly contributes to the well-being and academic success of our students. By supporting initiatives like the Elisha Project, we can help alleviate this burden and create a more conducive learning environment for all our students. The Elisha Project goes beyond just providing meals; they foster a sense of community and belonging. Through their inclusive approach and commitment to serving all segments of our community, including our students and their families, the project exemplifies the values of equity and compassion that we strive to instill in our school communities.

Since its establishment, the Elisha Project has provided over twenty million meals to deserving families, underscoring their significant contribution to our community. As the cost of living continues to rise, the demand for the Elisha Project's services is only expected to increase. By supporting H 8196, we can strengthen these efforts and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that no student goes hungry. This investment not only addresses an immediate need but also lays the foundation for a brighter future for our students.

I urge you to stand with us in supporting H 8196. Together, we can make a tangible difference in the lives of our students, ensuring that they have the resources they need to thrive.

Sincerely,

Patricia Royal
Superintendent of Pawtucket Schools