



Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education
Organizational Testimony in Support of House Bill #H7771
May 14, 2023

The Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education Justice (ARISE) stands in support of H7771, which proposes an appropriation of \$500,000 to the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner for the Rhode Island School for Progressive Education (RISPE).

RISPE's mission to close equity gaps and enhance the quality of education through a diversified teaching force is more urgent than ever. Despite national efforts, the pace of increasing teachers of color in our schools remains painstakingly slow, with Rhode Island experiencing a significant disparity between its students of color and teachers of color. This bill represents a foundational step toward correcting long-standing injustices in our educational system and ensuring that all children, regardless of background, receive the high-quality education they deserve.

The targeted funding will enable RISPE to continue and expand its high-quality teacher preparation programs, which are designed to meet the specific needs of Rhode Island's public school children. By training educators who reflect the rich diversity of our communities, RISPE not only improves academic outcomes but also fosters a school environment that celebrates and understands cultural differences.

The allocation of funds as outlined in H7771 will secure the continuation of these vital programs, which have already shown promising results in other urban areas. It is an investment not just in the educators of tomorrow, but in the future of our children and our state.

We urge you to pass H7771 and help pave the way for a more inclusive and effective educational system. ARISE is committed to supporting this bill and collaborating on future initiatives aimed at achieving our shared goals of educational equity and excellence.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We look forward to your affirmative action on this crucial legislation.