



Family Court of the State of Rhode Island
One Dorrance Plaza
Providence, RI 02903

MICHAEL B. FORTE
CHIEF JUDGE

April 4, 2024

The Honorable Robert Craven
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

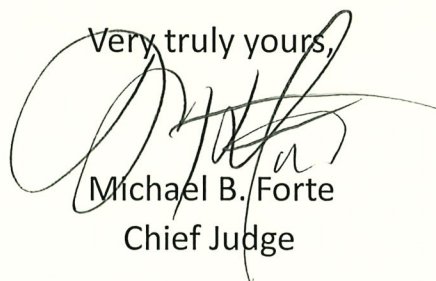
RE: **2024 – H-7802**

Dear Chairman Craven and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to comment on 2024 – H-7802 entitled “State Identification Cards for Minors Without Residence Act.” This bill would facilitate the acquisition of state identification cards for adolescents, aged 14-17 who are without a permanent residence, those who are in the care of DCYF and those who are in shelter care.

The importance of a driver’s license or State ID card cannot be underestimated. The adolescents and young adults who this bill seeks to assist are least likely to get a driver’s license. Thus, an 18-year-old would need a State ID card to apply for Medicaid, food stamps, homeless assistance through the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and various federally-funded workforce training programs. These are just a few of the benefits that require official identification.

Accordingly, the Court supports this bill as a necessary tool to ease the transition of foster youth towards independence.

Very truly yours,

Michael B. Forte
Chief Judge

MBF:nmp