

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Matthew L. LaMountain
Chair
Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island Senate
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: In Support of S2048 – State Identification Cards for Minors Without Residence Act

Dear Chairman LaMountain and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families (RICCF), a network of 44 organizations dedicated to advancing child well-being and family stability, we write in strong support of S2048.

This legislation addresses a critical and often overlooked barrier facing some of Rhode Island's most vulnerable youth: the lack of access to basic identification. For minors experiencing homelessness or those involved with the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), the absence of a state ID can limit access to essential services, education, employment opportunities, healthcare, and even safe housing.

S2048 provides a practical and compassionate solution by allowing eligible minors ages 14 to 17 to obtain a state identification card without a permanent address and without unnecessary administrative barriers. By permitting verification through DCYF or shelter providers and waiving associated fees, the bill ensures that youth who are already navigating instability are not further disadvantaged by bureaucratic requirements beyond their control.

Importantly, the bill also allows eligible youth to obtain a certified copy of their birth certificate without parental or guardian signature and at no cost. This provision is essential, as vital records are often a prerequisite for identification and access to services, yet can be difficult or impossible for these young people to obtain through traditional means.

For the children and youth our member organizations serve, identification is a gateway to stability, safety, and opportunity. Ensuring access to ID supports better engagement in school, smoother transitions into employment, and improved coordination of care and services.

S2048 aligns with Rhode Island's broader commitment to supporting youth in DCYF care and those experiencing homelessness by removing barriers and promoting equity in access to basic resources.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support passage of S2048. Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Rhode Island's children and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tanja Kubas-Meyer".

Tanja Kubas-Meyer
Executive Director