



March 15th, 2023

Dear House Judiciary Committee:

I am a Rhode Island voter and representative from COYOTE RI writing to you today in strong support of H5422, because it limits young children's out-of-school suspensions.

There are better ways to deal with "a disruptive student" than out of school suspensions. When I was in public school, if a student became disruptive. The teacher simply had the student move his desk into the hallway, and issued them a detention.

Out-of-school suspensions, especially for younger children, does not take into account, children with disabilities, mental health issues, and it does little to help address children with problematic behaviors. What it does do is shame children and isolate them from their peers, and interrupts their education,

During COVID we saw tons of people complaining that children were being traumatized by school closures, therefore it seems that out-of-school suspensions for petty rule violations are also traumatizing to children.

We need to move away from policing children in our schools. We need more counselors in our schools. We also need to address the fact more children of color are targeted for school suspensions.

We urge you to vote YES on H5422

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Thank you for your consideration,

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