

RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
ONE UNION STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
401/351-9400 • 401/351-1758 (FAX)

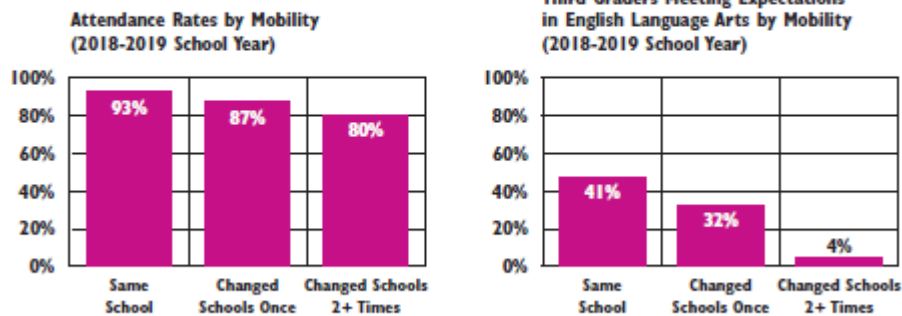
Testimony Re: Budget Article 12 Regarding Housing
House Finance Committee
March 12, 2020
Stephanie Geller, Deputy Director

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT strongly supports **Article 12** which recommends the establishment of a permanent funding stream for affordable housing through an increase in the real estate conveyance tax on property valued over \$500,000. This dedicated funding stream is expected to generate \$3.6 million in Fiscal Year 2021 which will be used to support new and rehabilitated homes for Rhode Island residents and expand housing-related resources for cities and towns.

Rhode Island has an urgent housing shortage. The supply of housing is not keeping up with demand, and the cost of housing is outpacing wages. Poor quality, unaffordable, and crowded housing has a negative effect on children’s physical health, development, and emotional well-being and on a family’s ability to meet their children’s basic needs. Children who live in families with housing cost burdens often live in low-quality and overcrowded housing and move frequently, all of which have been linked to increased absenteeism, lower educational achievement, and increased risk of homelessness.



School Mobility and Education Outcomes in Rhode Island



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, 2018-2019 school year.

We urge you to support this Budget Article and to **help create the first dedicated funding stream for housing in Rhode Island**. These funds are needed to ensure that we have safe, healthy, affordable homes for our most vulnerable residents, including low-income children and families, seniors, people with disabilities, and working people. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

