Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide additional data regarding immediate college enrollment by family income, race, ethnicity, and type of college in Rhode Island to help answer important questions about the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship and its impact on equity and college access and enrollment. This data compares immediate college enrollment for the class of 2016 (before the RI Promise Scholarship was implemented) to immediate college enrollment for the class of 2018 (the most recent data available).

The two-year college enrollment rate has increased from 16% for the class of 2016 (before the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship was available) to 25% for the class of 2018. During that same time period, the immediate two-year college enrollment rate for low-income students increased from 16% to 27%, from 14% to 24% for Black students, from 17% to 29% for Hispanic students, from 16% to 23% for Native American students, and from 16% to 24% for White students. Although there were gains in immediate college enrollment for all groups, these gains were largest among low-income students and students of color. It is critical to continue efforts to increase
college enrollment and completion among these groups so we do not lose equity gains. **Affordability is not the only barrier to increasing Rhode Island’s college enrollment and completion rates, but it is an important one.** Rhode Island KIDS COUNT supports Article 10, Section 7 which would sustain the successful aspects of the current Rhode Island Promise Scholarship.