

**Testimony Re: House Bill 7043 and House Bill 7069 Relating to Education-Funding for Field Trips**  
**House Health, Education & Welfare Committee**  
**January 29, 2020**  
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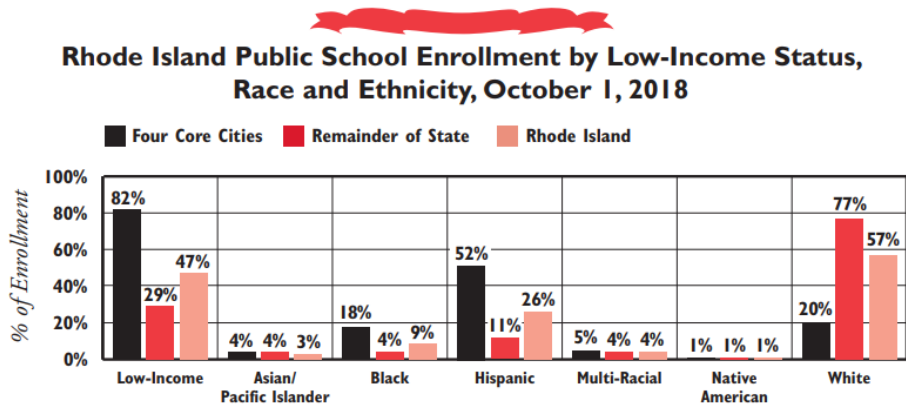
**RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT**  
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Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to provide information pertinent to House Bill 7043 and House Bill 7069 which address funding of school field trips and district-sponsored activities.

Field trips and experiences outside the classroom offer students the opportunity to have first-hand experiences that can deepen their knowledge of academic content and increase motivation to learn. All students should have access to the benefits of these types of enriching experiences. However, children in low-income families often do not have access to these types of high-quality field trips due to their inability to pay required fees.

Students in schools with high concentrations of low-income students have unequal educational opportunities. Children in poverty are more likely to attend schools that lack resources and have less access to extracurricular activities.

As of October 1, 2018, 47% (67,849) of public school students in Rhode Island were low-income (students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program). Low-income students are represented in every school district in Rhode Island.



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2018.

To achieve equity in education, we urge the Committee to consider provisions that ensure all students have access to high-quality field trips and activities and prohibit exclusion of student participation based on a student's ability to pay.

We thank the Committee for your commitment to equity in Rhode Island public education.