



# Children's FRIEND

Making a difference...  
one child at a time.



**CHAIRMAN**  
Mark Griffin

**VICE CHAIRWOMAN**  
Marie Ganim, Ph.D.

**TREASURER**  
Donald St. Peter

**ASSISTANT TREASURER**  
John D. Cregan

**SECRETARY**  
Charlotte Diffendale



#### BOARD

William J. Allen  
Kamilah A'Vant  
Lisa M. Bousquet  
Mary Cram  
Rosa E. De Castillo  
Michael DiSandro  
Ana Echevarria De Saquic  
Maureen Gurchigian  
Eva C. Hulse-Avila  
Leonard L. Lopes, Esq.  
Kyle O. Mason  
Kimberly I. McCarthy, Esq.  
Benjamin J. Mellino  
Carmen A. Mirabal  
Eduardo E. Naya  
Martha Newcomb, Esq.  
Bahjat Y. Shariff

**PRESIDENT AND  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
David Caprio

**CONTACT**  
153 Summer Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
401.276.4300.p  
401.331.3285.f  
401.729.5899.tdd  
childrensfriendri.org



May 3, 2023

Chairman Marvin Abney  
House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: In support of Representative Diaz's bill H6169**

Dear Chairman Abney and members of the Committee,

We write in strong support of Representative Diaz's bill to provide child care for child care educators.

For 189 years, Children's Friend has worked to advance the well-being and healthy development of Rhode Island's youngest and most vulnerable children. Today, alongside our permanency, home visiting, and nutrition services, we provide high-quality child care to hundreds of families at our 13 licensed early childhood centers across Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls, which have earned 3, 4, or 5 stars on the BrightStars Quality Rating System.

Children's Friend continues to face a significant staffing crisis, and we find ourselves unable to keep all our classrooms open due to our inability to staff those classrooms adequately. This is not about need or interest of families – we have waitlists – especially for our infant/toddler classrooms. These classrooms are closed because we do not have enough staff.

This bill would help address this staffing crisis by allowing staff to access the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) program regardless of income. We think this could be a big incentive to hire and retain staff – perhaps even encouraging some staff who have left the early learning workforce to return. We applaud this innovative idea and hope you will pass it as part of a package of legislation that includes reimbursement rate increases that will help shore up the early learning system across the board.

Thank you for your time and review of this testimony and for your continued efforts to support the children who are the future of our State. If you have further questions or need additional information, please contact me at [dcaprio@cfsri.org](mailto:dcaprio@cfsri.org).

Sincerely,

David Caprio  
President and CEO