

April 10, 2024

Representative Joseph J. Solomon  
Chair, House Corporations Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Support for H8056 – An Act Relating to Insurance**

Dear Chairman Solomon and Honorable Committee Members:

As Chief Operating Officer at VICTA and Immediate Past President of the RI Association for Addiction Professionals, I am writing in strong support of H8056. I would like to thank Representative Hull for introducing this essential piece of legislation which would ensure that any progress we make in addressing longstanding Medicaid rate stagnancy will also be applied to Managed Care Organizations.

At VICTA, the majority of our clients are Medicaid eligible – most are enrolled in a Managed Care plan. Within that structure, behavioral health benefits are overwhelmingly managed by Optum, who contracts with the two largest payers of Medicaid benefits. If these fee schedules are not held to the minimum standard of Fee for Service (FFS) Medicaid rates, it will undermine the intent of the work that the General Assembly has done to address our funding crisis.

Although the primary focus of discussions around this legislation has been the impact on Managed Medicaid plans, it is worth noting that there are Commercial health plans that are currently paying less than FFS Medicaid. The combined impact of these poor rates is that many skilled and experienced providers are opting not to accept insurance at all, further limiting accessibility of lifesaving care.

I urge you to support H8056 so we can achieve the goals that you as legislators have prioritized for the sake of our community members living with substance use, mental health, and/or trauma-related conditions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Peterson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lisa Peterson, LMHC/LCDP/LCDS/MAC