



January 20, 2026

Re: Support for H7020

Dear Chairman Solomon and Members House Corporation Committee

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SACRI is pleased to support H7020 sponsored by Representatives J. Brien, Solomon, Baginski, Serpa and Lima. SACRI's mission is to mobilize people to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. We accomplish this through *community organizing, public education, advocacy, and legislative action.*

H7020 would authorize veterinarians licensed in RI to establish a virtual client-patient relationship through electronic means as long as sound professional judgement is used to determine whether using veterinary telehealth is appropriate for delivering medical advice or treatment as opposed to in-person care. Telehealth services may include prescribing of medications to such a patient.

Pet ownership is important for the emotional well-being of older Rhode Islanders. For many, it is their main source of companionship. This is particularly the case for the significant number of older adults living alone. Their pets are often "aging in the community" with them and may be prone to chronic conditions needing veterinary care and monitoring. Many older adults, however, are no longer able to drive independently making it a challenge to take their beloved pets to in-person veterinary check-ups for routine or emerging issues.

By allowing telehealth veterinary services in Rhode Island, transportation barriers for older adults to access care for their pets would be removed, the state would join a list of growing states that are allowing this form of pet care, and help ensure that our older adults and their pets can age in place with dignity.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Anne Costa, Executive Director
SACRI