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ACLU OF RI POSITION: SUPPORT

TESTIMONY ON 26-H 7171, RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS – PATIENT PAYMENT INFORMATION

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This proposed legislation would bar a healthcare provider from requiring patients to provide electronic payment information to be kept on file as a condition to receiving treatment. The ACLU of Rhode Island supports this bill because it is a simple, non-burdensome restriction that will help protect personally identifiable financial information from data breaches.

There is no reason that a medical office needs to keep this information on file. As an organization that both has filed litigation over disruptive data breaches in Rhode Island and is all too aware of the unending number of data breaches that routinely take place in the public and private sector, we believe that any effort to protect the personal information of Rhode Islanders is a welcome step.

While the implementation of security measures to avoid hacking of databases that contain personal information is essential, the best solution is like this one – not requiring the information to be collected and electronically stored in the first place.

Protecting Rhode Islanders' data is more important than ever. We appreciate this bill's effort to achieve that goal in this context, as limited as it may be.

Thank you for considering our views.