

## STATE OF RHODE ISLAND



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April 2, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr., Chair  
House Committee on Corporations  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

### **RE: 2026 — H 8242 — An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Wellness and Oversight for Psychological Resources Act**

Dear Chair Solomon:

Please accept this letter regarding H 8242, which would establish an oversight process intended to safeguard individuals seeking therapy or psychotherapy services by ensuring that services are delivered by qualified, licensed, or certified professionals.

As artificial intelligence has the potential to significantly impact the delivery of behavioral healthcare services, and because this legislation impacts multiple state agencies that share licensure and oversight responsibility, including the RI Department of Health (RIDOH), the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and the Office of Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC), a comprehensive review across these agencies is necessary to ensure that there are no unintended consequences and the legislation is implemented as intended.

BHDDH, as the State's Single State Agency (SSA) for mental health and substance use disorders, has an obligation to ensure that Rhode Island citizens receive high quality behavioral healthcare and that they remain protected through statutory compliance with the relevant provisions of state and federal law as they pertain to confidentiality, including the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and 42 CFR Part 2.

Additionally, the definition of licensed professionals who would be subject to the provisions of H 8242 includes individuals who do not hold professional licenses, including licenses issued by RIDOH.

We appreciate the efforts of the sponsors to seek regulatory oversight over the expanding scope of artificial intelligence as it relates to behavioral healthcare. We look forward to working with the members of this Committee and our agency partners to ensure that the goals of the bill are fulfilled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Leclerc".

Richard Leclerc  
Director

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations  
Honorable Mary Ann Shallcross Smith  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy