

Re: Opposition to 6282

Dear Members of the Rhode Island House Health and Human Service Committee,

I am the Chair of Emergency Medicine at Brown University, Chief of Emergency Medicine at Lifespan's Emergency Departments, and President of Brown Emergency Medicine, a 501c3 foundation providing emergency medical staffing and services to several RI hospital Emergency Departments.

I am writing to share that I strongly oppose House Bill 6282. This bill would remove Department of Health (DOH) oversight of EMS at time when it is needed most. Lack of public health oversight would set EMS back years in RI and prevent the opportunities for innovations and improvements in EMS that have been done in other states, and which would potentially bring in significant federal grant dollars.

Briefly, EMS plays a critical role between public safety and public health. For EMS to perform its societal duties best, it is important for there to be partnership and oversight from public health professionals. This has been demonstrated during COVID, when the DoH provided critical support and oversight about EMS protocols around care and PPE.

There are multiple opportunities to improve the quality of EMS services and the organization of EMS particularly through federal grant programs such as the ET3 initiative. In order for RI to be competitive for these much-needed federal dollars the state would need strong partnership and oversight from a state public health agency.

*Jay*

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