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May 15, 2024

Hon. Marvin Abney, Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
82 Smith St  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support House Bill 7298 "Medicaid Home Care Rate Increases"

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am writing to bring your attention to a critical issue impacting your homebound constituent's dependent on homecare services. My late son Zachary and I have testified in person before you and this committee, regarding this same issue, the underfunding of Rhode Island's Medicaid Program for home care services and support. I wish I could be there in person today to provide testimony on this issue. Zachary passed at home on December 24, 2021 at the age of 22. My late son was a fierce advocate for homecare, its funding, and its benefits to people with disabilities and our aging population to be cared for in their home. My family and I were only able to keep Zachary at home with the amazing skilled nursing and CNA services that he received. These services supported his independence and provided the necessary medical and personal care that he needed to have a fulfilling and active life with as much independence as possible.

I am asking you to support House Bill 7298, sponsored by Representative Patricia Serpa, in the SFY 25 budget to fully- fund home care services for our most vulnerable, homebound Rhode Islanders. I am concerned about those friends and neighbors who are on wait lists for long periods of time to receive the care they need to remain safe at home. My family and I can tell you firsthand how difficult that wait can be. The economic impact to families who cannot leave their loved one without care so they are unable to work, or utilize their sick and vacation time to provide care, if the care giver calls out and there is not enough staff to offer a replacement. If we cannot retain the nurses and CNAs necessary to provide in home care and we cannot attract new nurses and CNAs into homecare in our State those friends and neighbors will not be able to remain safely at home. Including the language in this bill in the SFY25 budget will raise wages to stabilize and grow the homecare workforce, which will allow Rhode Islanders to receive the care they need. Homecare provides cost savings over facility care, it is

the place of choice for our friends and neighbors to remain and receive care and it provides better outcomes for those receiving care.

This is an investment in Rhode Island and Rhode Islanders, the OHIC report released on September 1, 2023, showed that providers are an average of 41.9% to 74.5% underfunded compared to the surrounding New England States. This report does not include the 18.9% underfunding for in-home skilled nursing and therapy services for adults and children with exceptional disabilities. This underfunding drives Rhode Island Caregivers out of State to work for increased wages and hurts the ability of Rhode Island to provide more cost-effective in-home services to those in need. This underfunding also hurts families like my own who need the services to keep their children at home, where they belong living their lives to the fullest with the greatest independence. It is time to invest in homecare and Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for supporting home care, our families Rhode Islanders receive quality, safe care to remain at home, and our caregivers that ensure services are performed efficiently and cost-effectively. If you have any questions, please contact me at 401-474-9829 and or [lquinn@bayada.com](mailto:lquinn@bayada.com).

Sincerely,

Lee-Ann Quinn RN

Director Bayada Home Health Care

and Mother to Zachary Quinn