

Questions for House Finance Committee hearing 5.15.2024

1. What was the purpose of determining the disparity between RI and other states for Home Care Medicaid funding (especially MA) if there was no plan to implement those changes to meet RI's needs right away once it was determined that there was a large difference?
2. Why is the Governor and General Assembly so concerned about children born without disabilities being able to attend school but then does nothing to make sure that agencies have sufficient funds to pay appropriate wages so school-aged disabled children can attend when their regular day shift nurse is out? Are they not concerned about those that need a nurse to be able to attend school? Do you not care about all those children?
3. Has anyone even begun the process of determining how many nurses, licensed over the past couple of years, are actually working in Massachusetts instead of RI because of the higher wages?
4. Knowing that there is such a large disparity in wages for nurses, and health professionals, why is nothing being done to right the wrong immediately, as it is with the actions to increase funding for Early Intervention by 100% of the shortfall currently occurring?
5. BHDDH has had a Consent Decree with the Federal Court system for over a decade now. There is a huge problem happening at DCYF right now regarding lengthy placements at Bradley. I assume this will turn into another Consent Decree. Are you simply

waiting for the Private Duty Nursing program to fail completely before families report the State to the Federal Government for not providing the proper funding so families don't have to continue to suffer with the lack of properly paid nurses? RI does not need another investigation by the Feds regarding the lack of funding for Private Duty Nursing when the state has funded a consulting company that has provided it with the knowledge that there is a severe shortfall in spending for home care CNAs, Nurses and Homemakers.

6. Home healthcare is very expensive. Failing to provide home healthcare to families with disabled children and elderly family members who get injured in their homes due to lack of home healthcare is even more expensive. In all of the healthcare industry in RI, Home healthcare is where the State gets the most bang for their buck. Please don't continue to fail those that need help the most in RI. Please provide the funding for House Bill 7298 in the budget July 1st.

Thank you,

Vinnie Ward, father of Abigail Ward

North Smithfield, RI