

Chris O'Brien

From: Al Vario <AVario@trudeaucenter.org>
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2024 3:46 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Support of HB 7591

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Albert Vario and I am the President & CEO of the J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center in Warwick RI. I am also a resident of the town of Smithfield, RI. Today, I am writing in support of bill HB 7591. The Trudeau Center provides critical supports and services to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In addition to other programs, the Trudeau Center offers Early Intervention and a variety of other children's programs, including homebased services that have a long history of underfunding by the state. Despite tremendous progress made the past few years, including rate reform passed by the General Assembly in 2022, I was disappointed to see that this year, the full funding recommended for these programs by the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) did not make its way to the Governor's proposed FY25 budget. In fact, at present, only \$22.2M of the recommended \$65M made it to the budget. Not only will this shortfall have a negative impact on these important children's services, but it also goes against the intent of the rate reform legislation passed in 2022 with regards to Medicaid reimbursement rates. HB 7591 will help ensure that the Governor includes the full recommended rates from the biennial rate review process conducted by the Office of the Health Commissioner (OHIC) in the State's annual operating budget.

I know that there will be many hard decisions that need to be made with regards to this year's budget, but I ask that this legislation be enacted so that the full recommended \$65M investment makes it to the FY25 budget so that we don't return to the days of drastic underfunding for these critically important children's programs.

I thank you for your time and consideration and I hope that you support bill HB 7591.

Respectfully,

Albert Vario



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