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## **Testimony to the House Finance Committee on HB 7591**

May 15, 2024

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President and CEO  
Thrive Behavioral Health  
Warwick, RI

Founded in 1976, Thrive Behavioral Health is the state's designated Community Mental Health Center for Kent County and is a contingently certified CCBHC by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. I am testifying in favor of supporting the mandate for full funding of the OHIC rate recommendations in the Governor's annual budget.

Many of our services such as group home care is not covered by CCBHC funding so after a decade of neglect, an increase in rates is critical to our ability to continue providing this valuable safety net service. This fiscal year (FY '24), we estimate that we will lose approximately \$700,000 between our 6 group homes (MHPRR's Mental Health Psychiatric Rehabilitation Residences).

I want to give you a real life example of how fragile our hold on the workforce is using the delay of CCBHC implementation.

CCBHC was originally slated to begin February 1, 2024, and was delayed 7/1/24. Staff remained on the job with the promise of an eventual fair wage resulting from CCBHC implementation.

We were then told in March that CCBHC implementation was going to be delayed again until October 1, and we immediately lost 5 staff. One nurse, two case managers and two admin staff. All went to higher paying positions and except for the nurse, away from the healthcare field.

Quite simply, staff are poised to move elsewhere and unless they are adequately compensated, they will move! This will be catastrophic to the human services industry and funding of the rate increase is critical to prevent that from happening.

Please fund the rate increase to the greatest extent possible for this year and include the requirement for ongoing full funding in the Governor's annual budget.