



February 26, 2024

Subject: Support for Medicaid Rate Increases in FY25 Budget Bill (H7225, Article 9, Section 5)

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

On behalf of SEIU 1199NE, representing approximately 5,000 healthcare and service workers in Rhode Island, I express our strong support for the proposed Medicaid rate increases for Social and Human Service Programs outlined in Governor McKee's FY25 Budget Bill (H7225, Article 9, Section 5). This bill includes crucial rate increases for Early Intervention and First Connections programs, addressing the urgent need for competitive wages to mitigate high staff turnover and service delays.

Early Intervention and First Connections are essential for supporting Rhode Island's most vulnerable populations. To fully staff these programs and eliminate waiting lists, we urge the Committee to consider larger rate increases and the implementation of a statutory annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for both programs. Such measures are critical for the health and development of infants, toddlers, and their families, ensuring their access to vital services.

Thank you for your consideration of this vital issue. We look forward to your support in passing these necessary rate increases.

Sincerely,

Alex Moore
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