



4/23/2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI 02903

Re: An Act Relating To Human Services -- Certification Of Childcare And Youth-Serving Workers And Operators, H5993

Chair Marvin L. Abney and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of H5993, *Certification of Child Care and Youth-Serving Workers and Operators*. The passage of this bill is essential to strengthening Rhode Island's social service workforce, ensuring that children, youth, and families receive high-quality care from a diverse and qualified pool of professionals.

My name is Kayla David, and I am the Vice President of the Home Division at FSRI. FSRI is a behavioral health and social service organization with the mission "to advance equity, hope, and opportunity in our communities." We have been serving Rhode Islanders for decades, through programs that support healthy child development, provide essential behavioral health and social services, and coordinate crisis intervention efforts that help children and families thrive.

FSRI is a provider of Family Care Community Partnership services, as well as residential, foster care, and community-based programs under contract with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families. Additionally, we support families through our Early Childhood programming, Certified Community Behavioral Health Center, and our psychiatric day school, Mount Pleasant Academy.

FSRI strongly supports bill H5993, which would eliminate the requirement for applicants seeking employment in youth and social services to pay for their own criminal background checks. While the cost of these checks may seem minor to some, it can be a significant barrier for others—deterring qualified individuals from pursuing opportunities to support Rhode Island's youth and families.

The services and supports we invest in for our children, youth, and families will shape the future health and well-being of our state. By investing in our children—and in the professionals and systems that support them—we are investing in a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support of this important legislation. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or follow-up.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kayla David, LMFT'.

Kayla David, LMFT, Vice President, FSRI