



April 21, 2025

### **Bill H-6073 Family Home Visiting**

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing in support of our program, Healthy Family America through Family Service of Rhode Island. Our national program is designed to prevent child abuse by supporting families build secure and nurturing relationships with their children. Our very important program is in need of additional funding, especially since RI was one of the three states that was not federally matched. It is crucial to not only the employees, but more importantly for the families we serve that home visiting programs receive the funding needed so we can continue the important work being done in the community.

By working in the community, I am able to see what is needed for the families in our state. Our families look forward to their home visits to not only learn about child development, but to feel supported in their role as being a parent. Postpartum depression is something we see often in the field and with us going out to the families, we are able to support mothers with their mental health. The physical and mental health of mothers is crucial to the child's overall health and well-being. We support families to ensure that their child receives the medical care needed such as their well child visits and the education about safe sleep. Our curriculum covers all stages of development for children and is accompanied by milestone screenings to ensure that children are getting early development support.

Whether we are bringing developmental activities, supporting a mom applying for benefits, or making referrals, our program support mothers, babies, and families across our state to feel secure and safe. For example, I've helped mothers get into therapy/primary care, refer children to early intervention, problem solve with families, assist families with clothing and supplies, and so much more. Our work is important to the families we serve and is evident by their feedback of the program. Specifically, our families explain the importance of having a "trusted support system during the most vulnerable times" (HFA Client) and having support with "my own mental health and feeling confident as my role as a mother" (HFA Client). One client specifically said, "I am a stronger, more grounded mom because of the support I received. This program works. It's not just helpful-it's life changing. I truly believe every Mom deserves this kind of support" (HFA Client).

Help support our program so we can continue to support Rhode Island families. Without our program, vulnerable families across our state will struggle while they try to keep their babies safe and secure.



Rhode Island families, mothers, and children are entitled to a healthy and happy life and our program helps support this daily. I urge you to pass the H-6073 for Family Visiting funding to enable all families have the “support they deserve”.

Thank you,

Lauren Serafin  
Supervisor for Healthy Families America