



# Rhode Island Health Care Association

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2025 – H 5466

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## AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES – MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Position: Support

### Written Comments:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Rhode Island Health Care Association (RIHCA). RIHCA is a trade association that represents sixty-two (62) member nursing facilities in the State of Rhode Island, representing more than 80% of the profession.

RIHCA fully supports House Bill 5466. For more than twenty (20) years, for as long as I can remember, RI's nursing home residents that are Medicaid beneficiaries' monthly "personal needs allowance" (PNA) was just \$50.00. Over the past thirteen years (2011 – 2024) alone, Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustments have totaled 43.34% with the compounding effect over those thirteen years. Throughout this time, a Rhode Island resident's PNA had remained at just \$50.00. Back in 2023, legislation was submitted to increase the personal needs allowance from \$50.00/month to \$100.00/month. When passed, the bill had been modified to an increase of just \$25.00/month to \$75.00/month. At the time, it was indicated that the bill would be reintroduced to add an additional \$25.00/month, bringing the monthly PNA to \$100.00/month. This legislation would do just that.

Personal Needs Money is meant to allow residents to enhance their quality of life by enabling them to choose to have personal items such as a cellphone, a Netflix subscription, beauty/barber services, etc. above and beyond services provided by the nursing facility. It also gives them the independence to order out from local restaurants and to give small gifts to their grandchildren and great grandchildren on special occasions.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) allows for personal needs allowance amounts up to \$200.00/month. In FY 23, seniors got an historic increase of 5.9%. And in FY 24, this increased 8.7%. This is the time to increase the RI Medical Assistance PNA from \$50.00/month to \$100.00/month. It is simply the right thing to do.

It is worth noting that RIHCA is supporting this PNA increase not because it benefits the facilities in any way but because it benefits the Medicaid beneficiaries entrusted to our care by improving their quality of life, which of course is of utmost importance.

Again, RIHCA fully supports H 5466, and we ask that the Committee votes for passage of this bill.

Thank you.

A blue ink signature of John E. Gage, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'G' followed by a horizontal line.

John E. Gage, MBA, NHA  
President & CEO

*"Setting the Pace in Nursing Home Care"*

A non-profit organization of proprietary and non-proprietary long term health care facilities dedicated to improving health care of the convalescent and chronically ill of all ages. An equal opportunity employer.

Since 1975, Social Security general benefit increases have been cost-of-living adjustments or COLAs. The 1975-82 COLAs were effective with Social Security benefits payable for June in each of those years; thereafter COLAs have been effective with benefits payable for December.

Prior to 1975, Social Security benefit increases were set by legislation.

#### Social Security Cost-Of-Living Adjustments

Year	COLA	Year	COLA	Year	COLA
1975	8.0	1995	2.6	2015	0.0
1976	6.4	1996	2.9	2016	0.3
1977	5.9	1997	2.1	2017	2.0
1978	6.5	1998	1.3	2018	2.8
1979	9.9	1999 <sup>a</sup>	2.5	2019	1.6
1980	14.3	2000	3.5	2020	1.3
1981	11.2	2001	2.6	2021	5.9
1982	7.4	2002	1.4	2022	8.7
1983	3.5	2003	2.1	2023	3.2
1984	3.5	2004	2.7	2024	2.5
1985	3.1	2005	4.1		
1986	1.3	2006	3.3		
1987	4.2	2007	2.3		
1988	4.0	2008	5.8		
1989	4.7	2009	0.0		
1990	5.4	2010	0.0		
1991	3.7	2011	3.6		
1992	3.0	2012	1.7		
1993	2.6	2013	1.5		
1994	2.8	2014	1.7		

**Table: Medicaid Personal Needs Allowance Amounts by State**

2025 Medicaid Monthly Personal Needs Allowance by State (Updated Jan. 2025)

Alabama	\$30.00
Alaska	\$200.00
Arizona	\$145.05
Arkansas	\$40.00
California	\$35.00
Colorado	\$108.73
Connecticut	\$75.00
Delaware	\$75.00
District of Columbia	\$106.00
Florida	\$160.00
Georgia	\$70.00
Hawaii	\$75.00
Idaho	\$40.00
Illinois	\$60.00

Indiana	\$52.00
Iowa	\$50.00
Kansas	\$62.00
Kentucky	\$60.00
Louisiana	\$38.00
Maine	\$40.00
Maryland	\$102.00
Massachusetts	\$72.80
Michigan	\$60.00
Minnesota	\$128.00
Mississippi	\$44.00
Missouri	\$50.00
Montana	\$50.00
Nebraska	\$75.00
Nevada	\$154.00
New Hampshire	\$74.00

New Jersey	\$50.00
New Mexico	\$94.00
New York	\$50.00
North Carolina	\$70.00
North Dakota	\$100.00
Ohio	\$50.00
Oklahoma	\$75.00
Oregon	\$79.07
Pennsylvania	\$60.00
Rhode Island	\$75.00
South Carolina	\$30.00
South Dakota	\$100.00
Tennessee	\$70.00
Texas	\$75.00
Utah	\$45.00
Vermont	\$79.93

Virginia	\$40.00
Washington	\$105.78
West Virginia	\$50.00
Wisconsin	\$55.00
Wyoming	\$50.00