

# Healthy Babies, Happy Moms

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
House of Representatives  
State of Rhode Island  
82 Smith Street, Room 35  
Providence, RI 02903

April 29, 2024

Dear Chairman Abney,

I am emailing you to ask for your support in ensuring that House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 are included in the SFY26 budget. These bills are vital to maintaining a stable, well-supported home care system for Rhode Island's Medicaid beneficiaries by establishing fair reimbursement rates and continuing critical workforce investments.

Home care providers and their staff are essential in delivering cost-effective, high-quality care to Rhode Islanders who need it most. However, without legislative action, we risk:

Allowing Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) to reimburse at lower rates than the state's established fee-for-service (FFS) rates, which undermines provider sustainability.  
Eliminating a \$1.56 per hour wage enhancement for more than 600 trained CNAs and homemakers, jeopardizing worker retention and continuity of care.

I ask that you urge Speaker Shekarchi and Senate President Ruggiero to include the language of House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 in the FY26 budget. in order to prevent these issues. The provisions within these two bills will:

- 1) Ensure Fair Medicaid Reimbursement Rates - Preventing MCOs from undercutting wages and threatening home care access.
- 2) Continue the Behavioral Health Training Program & Rate Enhancement - Protecting wage incentives for caregivers trained to serve patients with Alzheimer's, dementia, and mental health needs.
- 3) Retain Skilled Home Care Workers - Addressing workforce shortages and keeping qualified professionals in home care.

A well-supported home care system is a cost-effective solution that allows more Rhode Islanders to receive care at home rather than in costly institutional settings. Please take action by urging Speaker Shekarchi and Senate President Ruggiero to protect the quality and stability of home care by including for these critical bills in the SFY26 budget.

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Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Moren RN BSN IBCLC