

Healthy Babies, Happy Moms

April 29, 2025

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

Dear Chairman Abney,

I am reaching out to urge you to advocate for the inclusion of House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 in the SFY26 state budget. These bills are essential to stabilizing Rhode Island's Medicaid home care system by ensuring fair reimbursement rates and maintaining critical workforce training incentives.

Home care providers play a vital role in delivering cost-effective care to Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents. However, without legislative action, our state risks undermining recent investments in home care by allowing Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) to reimburse providers at rates lower than the fee-for-service (FFS) rates set by the General Assembly. Additionally, the expiration of state funding will result in a \$1.56 per hour wage cut for more than 600 CNAs and homemakers who have completed behavioral health training--jeopardizing their financial stability and workforce retention.

Please include the language of House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 in the FY26 budget. These provisions will establish a Medicaid Home Care Rate Floor, which prevents rate cuts that threaten the stability of home care services and workers' wages; continues the Behavioral Health Training Program & Rate Enhancement, which protects a \$1.56 per hour wage increase already in place for home care's lowest-paid workers, ensuring they can continue providing essential care; and strengthening the home care workforce, which helps retain direct care staff and prevents workforce shortages that could disrupt care for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Your leadership is crucial in ensuring that home care providers can continue to serve Rhode Islanders who depend on these services. Supporting House Bill 5774 and Senate Bill 255 in the state budget is the right decision for Rhode Island's seniors, individuals with disabilities and their home care providers.

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,

Kimberly Sweeney
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North Kingstown, RI 02852