

Chris O'Brien

From: Robert Griffith <rtgriffithmd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 9:45 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: Testimony in support of H5988

Categories: Red category, Yellow category

Good evening,

I am writing in strong support for H5988 which will increase Medicaid rates to 130% of Medicare. I am a pediatrician who has been practicing in Rhode Island for 42 years. I am a partner in a 6-person primary care practice in East Providence. Rhode Island is facing a primary care health crisis. Our primary care providers are aging. **It is predicted that up to 25% of pediatricians are planning to retire in the next 5 years** worsening an already significant lack of access to primary care services. We are constantly searching for physicians to join our practice and are unable to find anyone to join us. Providers whom we interview love our practice size, style, and patient population. Unfortunately, they choose to work elsewhere because we are unable to offer a salary competitive with surrounding states.

Graduating residents often face student debt of up to 500,000 dollars. Their monthly loan payments are often greater than their home mortgage! Our practice is unable to provide loan repayment forgiveness. An increase in Medicaid reimbursement will help stabilize our practice's finances and allow us to recruit primary care pediatricians to Rhode Island. This increase will also allow other groups to recruit desperately needed pediatric subspecialists and child psychiatrists.

Pediatricians do not choose Pediatrics to become wealthy. We choose Pediatrics to help children and families by providing high quality health care. An increase in reimbursement rates will allow us to not only hire new physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants but also to hire and retain nurses, administrative staff, family care coordinators, nutritionists and mental health care providers.

On a personal note, as a 68 year old pediatrician with no plans to retire, I strongly urge your support for H5988 to secure the future of primary care in Rhode Island.

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