



April 29, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Via: HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

Re: **H6046 - An Act Relating to Human Services – Medical Assistance**

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee:

WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care strongly supports House Bill 6046. Our organization is one of eight community health centers in Rhode Island. We provide primary medical, dental, behavioral health, discounted pharmacy, and related patient support services to 18,000 Rhode Islanders regardless of ability to pay. WellOne operates health center sites in Burrillville (Pascoag), Foster, Scituate, and North Kingstown. In several of these communities we are the principal and/or sole provider of these services. Many patients would forego health care were it not for the presence of WellOne in these communities.

Approximately 30% of WellOne's patients are covered by Medicaid, which makes it our single largest payer.

House Bill 6046 helps community health centers by revising an existing law that governs how the Medicaid Program pays community health centers (RI General Law 40-8-26). House Bill 6046 revises this law in two ways:

1. The bill clarifies the existing law to reflect the full complement of health care services already provided at community health centers. Where the language currently just refers to medical care, we recommend including behavioral and dental care to accurately show all the services available at health centers today.
2. This bill establishes a floor below which Medicaid reimbursement rates cannot fall. Community health centers need such a floor because the gap between what it costs to deliver health care, and the payment received for that care has been growing for many years. In 2018, WellOne's Medicaid per-visit payment rate covered approximately 90% of our corresponding cost. Today, WellOne's Medicaid payment rate only covers approximately 70% of our corresponding cost. This equates to an annual shortfall of approximately \$2 million for WellOne



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142A Danielson Pike, Foster, RI 02825
35 Village Plaza Way, N. Scituate, RI 02857

An equal opportunity provider and employer

This bill would ensure that WellOne's payment rates would equate to the lesser of our reasonable cost or 125% of the median rates for all health centers thereby helping to ensure our ongoing ability to provide services.

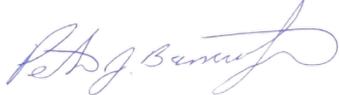
Over the past thirty days, WellOne has scheduled appointments for nearly 800 new primary care patients including several hundred former patients of Anchor Medical. We cannot continue to respond to the needs of Rhode Islanders in such a robust and timely manner absent sufficient Medicaid rates.

On behalf of WellOne, I urge the Committee to approve this bill and prioritize community health centers in the final budget. Investment in community health centers saves money. In 2024 the Congressional Budget Office concluded that funding community health centers would lead to more cost-effective patient care than the care that patients would otherwise receive. Investment in community health centers will decrease state and federal expenditures in the Medicaid and Medicare programs, by reducing emergency room visits and hospital stays.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

WELLONE PRIMARY MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter J. Bancroft". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Peter J. Bancroft, CPA
President and CEO