

**TO:** House Committee on Finance

**FROM:** Diane Barensen

**RE:** H6047 (Rep. Alzate) **SUPPORT**

**DATE:** April 29, 2025

To Chair Abney and honorable members of the House Committee on Finance:

My name is Diane Barensen. I live in Barrington, where I have lived for 40 years. I am a member of the Planned Parenthood Votes! RI Board. I am writing on behalf of this organization, and on behalf of all Rhode Islanders for whom affordable contraception is a priority.

In 2023, in response to the more than 2,000 legal challenges to all or parts of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Rhode Island General Assembly codified the ACA's protections for no-cost share preventive services into state law. In addition it is critically important to update Rhode Island's stand-alone contraception coverage mandate enacted in 2000. Specifically, H6047 will ensure access to all FDA-approved contraceptive methods, will limit insurer restrictions and delays and require insurers to cover alternative therapies if patients need them, will ensure coverage of over-the-counter contraceptives, and will extend Medicaid coverage of contraceptives to a 12-month supply.

Preventive reproductive care—and that includes birth control—is basic health care. The ACA codified that fact. But given the threats to overturn all or parts of it, we should not rest comfortably with the status quo. Remember Dobbs. And remind yourselves of the negative impact that came with it to the health and lives of people of child-bearing age and their families in many parts of our country. We must protect reproductive health care at the state level. And this is not just a health issue. It is also an economic issue. The cost of contraceptives, even with insurance, can cut significantly into a person's finances. It has been shown that since the enactment of the ACA, contraception use has improved, including the use of long-acting reversible contraceptives. Let's get this done in Rhode Island! I urge you to vote **YES** on H6047 and bring it to the House floor for a vote.

