

NAMI Rhode Island  
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May 20, 2025

Re: Support for House Bill H5320, An Act Relating to Insurance - Accident and Sickness Insurance Policies

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness' State Organization, NAMI RI, to request your support of H5320, related to the prohibition of the use of prior authorization or step therapy protocol by the Rhode Island medical assistance program, and any contract between the Rhode Island medical assistance program and a managed care organization. This legislation would prevent the harmful practice of prior authorization/step therapy, which can hinder or interrupt the treatment of persons living with mental health conditions.

The mission of NAMI RI is to provide advocacy, education, support and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness may build better lives. Our organization works with thousands of individuals (and their loved ones) statewide who are living with mental health conditions and symptoms. Many of our participants at some time or another have struggled to receive the right treatment and medication for their symptoms, and that struggle of trying to find the right fit can often exacerbate their conditions or even put them in life-threatening crises. Mental health medications affect people — even those with the same diagnosis — in different ways, including varying levels of effectiveness and different side effects. Because of this, it is important that a person can access the medication that works best for them. Prohibiting the use of prior authorization and step therapy protocols can help to ensure that no one has to go through unnecessary barriers to get the right care and medications they need to thrive.

Please support H5320; the passage of this bill will save lives!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Beth Lamarre", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Beth Lamarre, Executive Director, NAMI RI