



**TOWN OF COVENTRY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**50 Wood Street Coventry, RI 02816**

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May 20, 2025

House Committee on Rhode Island General Assembly  
State House  
Providence, RI

RE: Support for H5527 – Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) for Children and Youth

Dear Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Town of Coventry, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) program, as outlined in H5527. This program is crucial in addressing the growing behavioral health needs of children and youth in our community and across the state.

As local leaders, we witness firsthand the strain placed on our emergency services and public safety resources when children experience behavioral health crises. Currently, in the absence of alternative resources, families often must rely on emergency responders, including law enforcement and EMTs, to manage behavioral health crises, which can be costly and traumatic for both the child and their family. Additionally, these interventions often do not address the underlying needs of the child, further perpetuating the cycle of crisis.

The Tides and Family Services MRSS program provides a much-needed alternative, offering timely, community-based interventions that prevent children from being unnecessarily funneled into emergency rooms or law enforcement systems. By sending trained behavioral health professionals directly to the location of the child in crisis (such as their home, school, or community), MRSS avoids costly emergency responses and reduces the need for emergency personnel deployment. This not only alleviates pressure on local police and EMT resources but also allows public safety personnel to focus on higher-priority situations, resulting in cost savings for municipalities.

The cost savings realized from reduced emergency room visits, avoided hospitalizations, and minimized law enforcement involvement would allow cities and towns to better allocate resources to other urgent needs, improving both the financial efficiency and the overall well-being of our communities.

We urge the General Assembly to support the permanent establishment of MRSS services across the state. This program is not only an investment in the well-being of our children and families, but also a cost-effective solution that can help municipalities reduce unnecessary resource deployments while ensuring children in crisis receive the appropriate care and support.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robillard", with a large, sweeping initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert N. Robillard Jr., LMHC  
Director  
Town of Coventry Department of Human Services  
Coventry Resource and Senior Center