



**Testimony in Support**  
**Rhode Island Individual Market Affordability Act Of 2025**  
**May 20, 2025**

Chairman Abney and Committee members:

On behalf of the Latino Policy Institute (LPI), I submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill S0707, the Rhode Island Individual Market Affordability Act of 2025. This legislation is critical to maintaining affordable and accessible health insurance for Rhode Islanders, particularly Latino and low-income communities, who are disproportionately impacted by rising healthcare costs and the scheduled expiration of enhanced federal tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The Latino Policy Institute conducts research and advocates for policies that promote the well-being of Latino Rhode Islanders. Health coverage affordability remains one of the greatest barriers to economic stability and long-term health outcomes for our community. With nearly one in seven Rhode Islanders having received coverage through HealthSource RI (HSRI) at some point, the impact of this bill extends far beyond numbers—it directly affects families who rely on these subsidies to access critical healthcare services. The Latino community in Rhode Island has historically faced higher rates of uninsurance and greater financial barriers to medical care, making this policy a matter of both equity and public health. In 2023, approximately 4.5% of Rhode Island residents were uninsured, with Hispanic residents experiencing the highest uninsured rate at 11.5%, compared to 3.0% among White residents. Additionally, Hispanic adults in Rhode Island are more likely to be uninsured, lack a personal doctor, and face cost-related barriers to seeing a doctor compared to other racial and ethnic groups (Rhode Island Department of Health, 2024).

The enhanced Advance Premium Tax Credits (APTCs) have significantly expanded access to healthcare, contributing to a historic low uninsured rate of 2.2% in Rhode Island. However, if these tax credits expire in December 2025 without a state-based replacement, thousands of working-class families will be forced to make impossible choices—either go uninsured, enroll in lower-quality high-deductible plans, or forgo necessary medical care altogether. HSRI estimates that 88% of currently enrolled households eligible for financial assistance will see premium increases, with average costs rising by 85%. Households earning below 250% of the federal poverty level will be hit the hardest, facing premium increases of up to 155%, making health insurance simply unaffordable for many.

For example, under the current enhanced subsidies, a 45-year-old Rhode Islander making \$43,750 annually can afford a Gold plan with better coverage at a lower cost than a Bronze plan. Without these subsidies, the same individual would face a staggering increase in premiums or be forced into a plan with a \$7,000 deductible—a devastating financial burden that discourages preventive care and leads to worse health outcomes. Without legislative

action, Rhode Island risks reversing hard-fought gains in healthcare accessibility, disproportionately harming Latino families, immigrants, and low-income workers.

The Rhode Island Individual Market Affordability Act of 2025 provides a pragmatic, state-based solution to this crisis by replacing lost federal assistance through a modest 1% insurance assessment on commercial health plans. This approach ensures continued affordability for enrollees, prevents drastic premium hikes, and protects the stability of Rhode Island's healthcare marketplace. Additionally, it allows Rhode Island to remain a national leader in ensuring equitable health coverage, sustaining the progress made in reducing disparities.

Latino Rhode Islanders are a vital part of the state's workforce, economy, and cultural fabric, yet they continue to experience systemic barriers to healthcare access. The General Assembly has an opportunity to take preventative action to ensure that health insurance remains accessible and that no Rhode Islander has to choose between paying rent or seeking medical care. For these reasons, the Latino Policy Institute strongly urges passage of S0707. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
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Latino Policy Institute