



Howard Dulude
Interim President

May 29, 2025

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairman, House Committee on Finance
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support – GBA 26

Dear Chairman Abney,

On behalf of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI), I write to express our strong support for Governor's Budget Amendment #26 to Articles 1 and 8 of the FY 2025 Revised and FY 2026 Appropriations Acts.

This amendment represents an urgently needed investment in our state's behavioral health infrastructure. Rhode Island, like many states, faces ongoing challenges in caring for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness who no longer require acute psychiatric hospitalization but cannot be safely discharged to community-based settings due to the complexity of their needs. These patients often remain inappropriately boarded in emergency departments or acute inpatient beds, placing strain on hospitals and compromising care for all patients.

The establishment of a 21-bed long-term care behavioral health unit at Our Lady of Fatima Hospital would create a specialized setting for individuals who need continued behavioral health services in a more structured, long-term environment. This unit would fill a critical gap in the continuum of care and help relieve pressure on overcrowded emergency departments and inpatient psychiatric units across the state.

We commend the Governor and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services for advancing this targeted solution. We urge your support for GBA #26 and look forward to continuing our partnership to strengthen Rhode Island's healthcare system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Tomasso", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Lisa P. Tomasso
Senior Vice President