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Washington, D.C. 20004  
May 19, 2025

House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

***RE: SUPPORT for H 6308—An Act Relating to Human Services—Medical Assistance—Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment***

Dear Chair Abney, Vice Chair Slater, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Inseparable, a national nonprofit mental health advocacy organization, I am writing to express strong support for **House Bill 6308**. At Inseparable, we are focused on expanding access to early intervention and ensuring mental health care is integrated into places where youth already are—especially in schools.

Right now, we're in the midst of a youth mental health crisis. Families struggle to get timely care. And too often, help comes too late—after a crisis.

When youth struggle with their mental health, it impacts every part of their life: their learning, their relationships, and their safety. But we also know that **early intervention works**. The earlier a young person receives care, the better their chances of recovering, staying in school, and thriving long term.

That's why **school-based mental health care is so critical**. Schools are the place where youth spend most of their day, where problems are often first noticed, and where barriers to care are lower. But right now, we're leaving federal dollars on the table that could be used to support school-based services. House Bill 6308 changes that.

House Bill 6308 allows Rhode Island to maximize federal Medicaid funding for mental health and health services provided in schools. Specifically, it:

- **Directs the state to submit a State Plan Amendment** to the federal government to allow Medicaid reimbursement for health and behavioral health services provided in schools to **all eligible students**, not just those with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- **Ensures that federal funds are reinvested in school-based health and behavioral health programs and services**, creating a sustainable infrastructure for supporting students.

Rhode Island already bills Medicaid for some school-based services—but only for students with an IEP or IFSP. That leaves out the many students who are struggling and receiving supports from school health and behavioral health professionals. House Bill 6308 corrects this gap and brings Rhode Island in line with 25 states who have already extended Medicaid to cover all students and are seeing the benefits:

- **Louisiana** saw a **35% increase in federal revenue** when it began allowing school-based Medicaid billing for health and behavioral health services.
- **North Carolina** reported a 35% increase in Medicaid reimbursement in participating school districts, with no added cost to the state Medicaid agency.

Rhode Island has the opportunity to do the same—bringing in **federal matching dollars** to support services we're already largely paying for with local or state funds. Importantly, this legislation will not require state general fund investment *and* it will ensure that new federal funds go to local education agencies to support students' health and well-being. It will help more kids get help earlier—**before they're in crisis**.

We urge the House Finance Committee to pass House Bill 6308 and give our schools and communities the tools they need to support Rhode Island's youth.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to our children's mental health.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela Kimball". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large initial 'A' and a stylized 'K'.

Angela Kimball  
Chief Advocacy Officer  
angela@inseparable.us