



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Honorable Marvin Abney
Chair
House Finance Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H6373 – Related to Health and Human Services – Medical Assistance

June 3, 2025

Dear Chair Abney,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 6373. The Rhode Island Medical Society deeply appreciates the General Assembly's focus on improving access to care for the thousands of Rhode Islanders who rely on Medicaid. This bill rightly recognizes that when we underfund primary care, it's patients—especially those who are already vulnerable—who feel it first and most acutely.

Across the state, patients are struggling to find a primary care physician. Practices are closing, wait times are growing, and many individuals are being forced to rely on urgent care or emergency departments for routine needs. At the same time, over one-third of Rhode Islanders are covered by Medicaid, yet the reimbursement rates for these patients often don't cover the cost of care. That gap is driving providers out of the system—and leaving patients behind.

H6373 offers a valuable starting point by proposing to raise Medicaid rates to Medicare levels. However, Rhode Island's Medicare rates are among the lowest in the region, and tying Medicaid to those benchmarks may not be enough to rebuild the primary care network that our patients need. In fact, other proposals under consideration may be more immediately implementable and better positioned to direct funds to the front lines of care.

This bill helps elevate a conversation we must have—and act on. If we want patients to have real access to high-quality, continuous care, we need a long-term plan to invest in primary care, close regional reimbursement gaps, and ensure that the dollars we allocate truly reach the people providing care. RIMS stands ready to work with this committee and all stakeholders to make that vision a reality.

Sincerely,

Kara Stavros, MD
President