

Honorable Chair Abney of the
House Finance Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H7408

February 3, 2026

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Nicole Siegert and I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 7408. As a Family Medicine physician practicing in Rhode Island, I strongly support the passage of H7408 and the efforts to secure the financial viability of Roger Williams Medical Center and Our Lady of Fatima Hospital. These hospitals play an indispensable role in providing critical healthcare services, including emergency care, inpatient treatments, and outpatient services, particularly to underserved and vulnerable populations. Their continued operation is vital not only for patient care but also for the health and economic stability of our communities.

I have practiced as a Family Physician in Rhode Island since 2011. Since then the healthcare landscape has significantly changed with the closure of Memorial Hospital and many primary care physicians leaving the state to practice in places with higher reimbursement rates or leave primary care altogether due to the unsustainably high administrative burden. I am currently working in two health centers in Rhode Island and directly see the impact of patients not having a primary care clinician. Patients are sicker and more likely to need emergency medical care and hospitalization. During the same time the wait times in the Emergency Rooms have massively increased. With the health care system already massively strained in Rhode Island, there is no doubt that the closure of Roger Williams and Fatima Hospital will result in patient harm and death due to the lack of access to timely and appropriate medical care.

The proposed financial support through the debt service reserve fund ensures that these essential hospitals can transition to new ownership under CharterCARE Health of Rhode Island, Inc., protecting 2,700 jobs and preventing further disruption to healthcare services. This bill is a proactive step in preserving vital healthcare infrastructure in our state, safeguarding public health, and ensuring that our most at-risk residents continue to have access to high-quality care. It also ensures that other parts of the healthcare system will not be overwhelmed by a sudden influx of new patients seeking care, a scenario that would threaten the stability of the healthcare system across Rhode Island.

I respectfully urge you to support H7408.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Nicole Siegert, MD

