



March 3, 2026

Subject: SEIU 1199NE Position on Article 8 – Nursing Home Reimbursement Rates

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

On behalf of SEIU 1199NE, representing approximately 7,500 healthcare, home care, and child care workers across Rhode Island — including roughly 750 nursing home workers — we write to express concerns regarding Article 8 and the proposed 2.5% nursing home rate increase.

We believe the proposed 2.5% increase is inadequate. Based on prior projections, the rate was expected to be at least 3.2%. Reducing the rate increase continues a pattern of underfunding that has contributed to staffing instability and quality challenges in Rhode Island’s nursing homes.

This issue must be viewed in the context of the Nursing Home Safe Staffing Law.

Rhode Island enacted the Safe Staffing Law to ensure residents receive adequate, hands-on care. Staffing levels are directly tied to patient outcomes, including fall prevention, infection control, and timely assistance with daily living activities.

If facilities are required to meet safe staffing standards, reimbursement policy must reflect the cost of compliance.

The structure of the rate increase is specifically designed to support that goal. By law, 80% of any rate increase must be directed to worker compensation. This ensures that the majority of new funding strengthens frontline staffing — the employees who provide direct resident care.

As a result, the rate increase is not simply an operational subsidy; it is a mechanism for improving staffing stability and patient care quality.

It also has a clear economic impact. Nursing home workers earn modest wages and spend their earnings locally. Dollars directed toward worker compensation circulate through Rhode Island communities in the form of housing payments, childcare expenses, and consumer spending.

A reduced rate increase therefore has dual consequences:

- It undermines the state's ability to support safe staffing compliance.
- It suppresses wages in a sector that contributes directly to local economic activity.

We urge the Committee to restore the rate increase to at least 3.2% to align reimbursement policy with safe staffing requirements and economic stability.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alex Moore

Political Director

SEIU 1199NE

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