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March 24, 2026

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

Re: **Oppose Governor's FY2027 Budget (HJR 7127), Department of Health**

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Protect Our Healthcare Coalition is a group of leading Rhode Island nonprofit organizations and consumer groups with a shared mission to protect, improve, and expand equitable access to quality, person-centered, affordable health care for all.

The Coalition respectfully submits testimony in opposition to sections of the Governor's budget for the Department of Health, especially the lack of funds for (1) the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program or (2) the Pediatric Psychiatry Resource Network (PediPRN).

The current budget for RIDOH does not include \$535,000 in state general funds needed to access \$1,600,000 in new federal funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program. Rhode Island is one of few states in the United States that have left federal funds on the table. Agencies that implement these programs need these funds to pay staff and provide enrollment options to families.

The Coalition applauds the Governor for including funds for the Rhode Island Moms Psychiatry Resource Network (MomsPRN), which provides critical pregnancy and post-partum mental health support.

However, the Governor's budget does not include any funding for the PediPRN program. Without state funding, the PediPRN program will end in September 2026. All but one state has a child psychiatry access program. PediPRN has directly supported more than 3,000 pediatric patients in Rhode Island, and nearly one in three Rhode Island children has a diagnosable mental health challenge.

The Coalition recommends that this budget proposal be amended to include funds for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program and PediPRN.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Alexandra Steinberg
Coordinator, Protect Our Healthcare Coalition

Protect Our Healthcare Coalition partners include: Economic Progress Institute, RIPIN, Mental Health Association RI, RI Health Center Association, Latino Policy Institute, United Way of Rhode Island, Senior Agenda Coalition RI, RI Medical Society, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, SEIU Rhode Island Council, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Blood Cancer United, RI Coalition for the Homeless, Rhode Island Working Families Party, Mental Health Recovery Coalition, RI Community Food Bank, RI Psychological Association, Substance Use & Mental Health Leadership Council, Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families, HousingWorks RI, Rhode Island Organizing Project (RIOP), National Association of Social Workers RI Chapter, The Womxn Project, Advocates for Better Care
