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March 23, 2026

The Honorable Teresa Tanzi  
Chair, Subcommittee on Human Services  
House Committee on Finance  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Tanzi and Members of the Human Services Subcommittee:

The RI Health Center Association<sup>1</sup> (RIHCA) opposes two items in: **H7127** Department of Health FY 2027, FY 2026 Revised Budgets

The first is the following proposal for FY 2027:

*Tuberculosis Clinic Miriam Hospital. To achieve general revenue savings, the Governor recommends a decrease of \$315,000 in general revenue supporting the Miriam Hospital's Tuberculosis Clinic.*

RIHCA believes this funding cut will have an immediate and dangerous impact on the health of all Rhode Islanders. The TB clinic **screens** children entering the Providence and Pawtucket school systems, persons entering the U.S. from other countries, and persons exposed to TB. The clinic **treats** adults and children with active TB infection. Active treatment requires management of complex medication regimens, careful monitoring, treatment adherence, and intensive public health follow-up to prevent further transmission of this contagious infection. In addition to patient screening and treatment, the clinic is a **resource** to physicians, providers, hospitals, and community health programs across the state who need specialized expertise related to TB.

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<sup>1</sup> The RI Health Center Association works to support, sustain, and strengthen community health centers so they can provide high-quality, patient-centered, integrated and equitable primary health care to their patients and communities. Rhode Island's community health centers are:

*Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc.  
East Bay Community Action Program  
Thundermist Health Center  
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care*

*Comprehensive Community Action Program  
Providence Community Health Centers  
Tri-County Community Action  
Wood River Health*

The TB clinic is necessary to maintain the public health of all Rhode Islanders. We urge you to reject this cut.

The second is the following proposal to revise the FY 2026 Budget:

*Health Professional Loan Repayment Program. The Governor recommends a reduction of \$200,000 in general revenue for this program only in FY 2026 due to a delay from the federal government's application process.*

The State Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) helps Rhode Island's community health centers and other health care organizations recruit and retain primary care clinicians. The FY2026 Budget was the first time the state invested state dollars directly for HPLRP awards. Prior to FY 2026, the program was funded solely with federal funds, revenue from prior hospital conversions, and over \$375,000 in donations from private entities. Total funding for the HPLRP in FY 2025 was \$1,235,345.66:

Federal HRSA Grant Award:	\$755,820.00
Private Donations:	\$375,000.00
<i>Delta Dental \$50,000</i>	
<i>Blue Cross &amp; Blue Shield of Rhode Island \$50,000</i>	
<i>Rhode Island Health Center Association \$50,000</i>	
<i>Rhode Island Medical Society \$25,000</i>	
<i>United Healthcare \$20,000</i>	
<i>Rhode Island Foundation \$180,000</i>	
Hospital Conversions Conditions of Approval:	\$50,000.00
Carry Forward – Federal Award (Grant year 2 - 2024):	\$25,000
Carry Forward – Private Donations (Grant year 2 – 2024):	\$29,525.66

That amount provided awards to over 40 individuals but left more than 100 eligible applicants without an award.

The rationale provided for reducing the \$200,000 General Revenue is a delay in the federal government application process. Even with this delay, that \$200,000 could be used towards loan repayment in future award cycles. We recommend the \$200,000 not be reduced but carried forward to FY 2027, providing \$400,000 in available awards for the next cycle.

If additional information would be helpful, please let me know at ENicolella@rihca.org.

Sincerely,



Elena Nicolella  
President and CEO