

Chair Abney and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Emmy Shearer, and I am an Emergency Medicine physician at Brown University Health, an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School, and a post-doctoral research fellow at the Brown University School of Public Health.

I am writing to urge the Committee to restore funding for the Rhode Island Department of Health

Tuberculosis (TB) Clinic.

Why this matters to me and my work:

While tuberculosis is not widespread in Rhode Island, timely and effective treatment of tuberculosis is critical in preventing disastrous outbreaks of a completely preventable infectious disease. The RISE clinic is the only place I know of in my work where I can quickly & effectively send patients for TB testing and treatment. Without this clinic, I would be forced to admit any patient I suspected of having TB to an inpatient bed, which would take up valuable inpatient beds away from other patients and cost the healthcare system thousands of dollars.

Rhode Island is home to a large number of immigrants and people who travel widely. Just this week, I had a patient come to the emergency department with a case of active tuberculosis. Without the RISE clinic, we would not have been able to arrange timely or effective follow up care for this patient.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to restore funding for the TB clinic and ensure Rhode Island maintains the capacity to manage tuberculosis effectively and protect public health.

Sincerely,

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Emmy Shearer, MD MPP MSc

Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, Brown University Health & the Warren Alpert Medical School, Brown University

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Health Services, Policy & Practice, Brown University
School of Public Health