



The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

March 24, 2026

Dear Chair Tanzi and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Human Services:

My name is Beth Cronin, I am an Obstetrician and Gynecologist practicing at Women & Infants Hospital in Providence, RI and submitting testimony on behalf of the Rhode Island Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) in **strong support of H7127** the proposed one-time budget allocation of \$600,000 for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) contained in Article 1, Section 1 for EOHS of the proposed FY 2027 budget. ACOG represents more than 60,000 physicians and partners dedicated to advancing women's health and the health of individuals seeking obstetric and gynecologic care, including over 200 members in the Rhode Island section. ACOG maintains the highest standards of clinical practice and continuing education of its members; strongly advocates for equitable, exceptional, and respectful care for all women and people in need of obstetric and gynecologic care; promotes patient education; and increases awareness among its members and the public of critical issues facing patients and their families and communities.

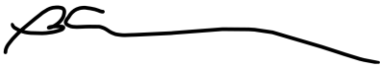
This funding allocation will cover the cost of preventive care such as cancer screenings, STI testing and treatment, birth control, and other essential health care for patients who are now blocked from using their Medicaid insurance at PPSNE due to the "defund" provision in the federal H.R.1 law passed in July 2025. **PPSNE is a safety net provider serving nearly 10,000 patients last year in Rhode Island.** It is essential that the state backfills the blocked federal funding so PPSNE can continue to serve patients who need care now and in the future. Ultimately H.R.1 is making it harder for people to get the care they need from health care providers that they choose and trust, this decision will worsen outcomes for our patients and make our communities sicker

In just eight months since President Trump signed H.R. 1 into law, 23 Planned Parenthood health centers have been forced to permanently close, leaving thousands of patients with fewer options, higher costs, and less freedom to make decisions about their health. **We cannot let this happen here in Rhode Island.** I have practiced in Providence since I arrived here for residency in 2006. I have cared for patients at PPSNE during my training and cared for countless patients in the hospital and elsewhere who have received essential health care at PPSNE over the years. They are an essential health center in our state. Without this budget allocation to backfill the Medicaid dollars that they are currently not receiving for the care they are providing, they cannot keep providing essential health care in Rhode Island and would be at risk of closing their doors. While I wish I could say we would figure it out and everyone would still be able to get prompt care in Rhode Island, that would be next to impossible if PPSNE needed to close their Providence office. Absorbing the 15,500 patient visits (82% of which are for routine gynecologic or preventative care) in our already busy clinical system at Women & Infants would be next to impossible without patients waiting significant amounts of time for care. This would lead to unacceptable delays in access to contraception, cervical cancer or breast cancer screening, STI testing and treatment as well as other routine gynecologic care. Ultimately this would mean unplanned pregnancies, delayed cancer diagnosis, untreated STIs, unmanaged bleeding and pain - **this is unacceptable.**

The Rhode Island General Assembly has been a leader nationally in ensuring its citizens have equitable access to reproductive health care, but this access remains vulnerable due to the impacts of H.R. 1. ACOG strongly supports the budget allocation in H 7127 because all Rhode Islanders should have the right to visit their trusted provider for the health care they need. I urge the committee to support the proposed \$600,000 to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England in the FY 2027 budget to ensure the necessary state funding for preventive health services and to protect patients' access to care.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BC', followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Beth Cronin, MD
District 1 Legislative Chair, ACOG