

Regarding H7127

March 24, 2026

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

My name is Maureen Morrow. I am from Tiverton and am a retired nurse-midwife who represents the Rhode Island chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM). There are about 97 certified nurse midwives and certified midwives in Rhode Island, many of whom work at Care New England, South County Hospital, the Providence Community Health Center, Brown Health, and other private practices. And yes, midwives work at Planned Parenthood in Providence as members of the provider network for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE).

On behalf of ACNM, I am testifying in strong support of the proposed one-time budget allocation of \$600,000 for PPSNE contained in Article 1, Section 1 for EOHHS of the proposed FY 2027 budget (H 7127). This funding will cover the cost of preventive care such as cancer screenings (Pap tests), clinical breast exams for women who notice lumps, 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. Women with Medicaid are sometimes turned away from private practices and PPSNE has been a safety net provider serving nearly 10,000 patients last year in Rhode Island. Patients are counting on the state to step in and backfill the blocked federal funding so PPSNE can continue to serve patients who need care now and in the future.

Legislators at the federal level, especially when looking at complex issues like health care, miss the fine points that distinguish the MULTIPLE services that women at Planned Parenthood receive. Many legislators are focused on one topic and one topic only: abortion care. **Abortion care accounted for just 18% of all visits at Providence Planned Parenthood in 2025.**

In just eight months since President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill 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.

The ACNM asks that Rhode Island **join other States** that have taken action to stabilize services and help protect access to care for patients who need it. Twelve states— including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and Washington—have allocated millions in funding to maintain access to care for their Medicaid enrollees.

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.

Sincerely,

Maureen Morrow, MSN, MPH

Legislative liaison, RI ACNM

Tiverton, RI