



House Committee on Finance  
c/o Chair Marvin Abney  
State House, 82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

April 6, 2026

Dear Chair Abney and members of the committee,

On behalf of National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), the nation's bone marrow donor registry, thank you for supporting Rhode Islanders who say "yes" to saving lives by supporting HB 7159. This bill would expand access for state employees to job-protected leave for bone marrow and peripheral blood cell donors, which removes a key barrier that prevents many from donating.

Donors provide hope, and often a cure, to patients battling life-threatening blood cancers and disorders. But the donation process requires time away from work for donation appointments, travel, the procedure itself, and a brief recovery. While NMDP covers costs like travel and lost wages, we cannot guarantee job protection, leaving some donors to choose between saving a life and keeping their job. Sometimes, job-protected leave is the difference between a donor saying yes and providing hope to a patient, and no, leaving some patients with no option for a cure.

HB 7159 allows time off from work for people going through the donation process without the risk of losing their jobs. People who donate bone marrow or blood cells do not require an overnight hospital stay, and need up to 40 hours of non-consecutive leave over 4-6 weeks for the donation process. Ensuring job-protected time off for state employees would reduce barriers to donation and allow more Rhode Islanders to say "yes" when called to help. Every year, thousands of patients in the U.S. need a blood cell transplant from an unrelated donor, and each registered donor could be someone's only chance at survival. In Rhode Island, this bill would offer hope to the hundreds of patients whose treatment depends on finding a matching donor.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring more patients can receive hope for a cure by helping living donors. Supporting donors ultimately supports patients, families, and communities across the state. Please vote "yes" on HB 7159.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Simaytis", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Anne Simaytis, MPS

Senior National Advocacy Manager

Encl: Rhode Island State Asset Sheet