

Dear Committee Chair Abney and committee members,

My name is Mary Anne K. Clarke, and I am from North Kingstown and have been an adjunct faculty member at RI College for over 25 years.

I am writing to ask you to support **H 7158**, the bill that would extend health insurance benefits to qualifying adjunct faculty at the State's public institutions of higher education.

Adjunct faculty, who teach considerably more than one-third of the courses at Rhode Island College, currently are not permitted to receive health insurance benefits from the state. Current law permits those state employees working 20 hours or more per week, about half of the standard workweek of a state worker, to receive medical insurance. This bill uses the same threshold for adjunct faculty, expressing service as a percent of Faculty Load Hours of courses taught instead of expressing service as hours worked per week.

Rhode Island College could not function without the contributions of adjunct faculty. It is fundamentally not fair that adjunct faculty do not have the same rights as other state employees to participate in the state's employee health insurance plan, and this bill would rectify that.

I am 9 years younger than my husband and he is approaching retirement and I will have to get my own health insurance. Having the option to get health insurance as an adjunct faculty member at RIC would be incredibly helpful. If I do not have this option, I will have to pay a much higher premium and honestly this is not fair or equitable considering that I have been teaching at RI College as an adjunct for almost 25 years supporting not only my alma mater, but a state school that has impacted many local Rhode Islanders.

I hope you will stand with our public college faculty, students, and families by supporting **H 7158**.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne K. Clarke

Adjunct Faculty III

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RI College

