



April 30, 2026

Representative Marvin Abney
Chair, House Finance Committee
RI state House
82 Smith St
Providence, RI 02903

Testimony in support of H 7686-PRIMARY CARE

Dear Chair Abney:

As a constituent of House District 31 and:

As legislative liaison of the Nurse Practitioner Alliance of RI (NPARI), director of the Family Nurse Practitioner program at the University of RI, and a nurse practitioner at Brown Health, where I supervise (precept) nurse practitioner students I strongly urge your committee to support the continuation of the **PRIMARY CARE TRAINING SITES PROGRAM**.

This program was removed from the governor's budget this session, after achieving much success during its first year of operation. This project established the office of Primary Health Care at the Dept of Health that coordinated the establishment of a funding mechanism for primary care agencies with an educational component to be utilized by clinical preceptors and nurse practitioner, physician assistant and medical students. This program went on, in only one year, to increase the number of primary health care training opportunities by 68%, composed of 354 trainees with a projection of 594 trainees by the end of June, 2026.

The program provides financial incentives, a structured curriculum and peer learning collaborative supports for preceptors to strengthen and expand community-based primary care training, which is connected with retention of students who choose to practice in Rhode Island. Without being able to fund our preceptor agencies our nurse practitioner programs at the university will have to continue to turn away qualified applicants.

Continued funding for this program is not included in the Governor's budget. Without sustained support, Rhode Island risks losing momentum at a time when the state cannot afford to step back. Disruption to the program would limit training capacity, diminish our ability to prepare future primary care clinicians, and undermine progress toward building a stable primary care workforce. In this first year, nine practices were waitlisted. Full funding is needed to expand the program beyond this year's capacity.

This has been a vital investment in Rhode Island's primary care workforce development to expand primary health care availability in the state. I urge passage of H7686.

<https://npari.enpnetwork.com>

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Sincerely,

Denise Coppa

Denise Coppa, PhD, APRN, FAAN, FAANP

Legislative Liaison.

Member of the Care Transformation Collaborative Board of Directors.

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