



**State of Rhode Island**  
**Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos**

April 30, 2026  
The Hon. Marvin Abney  
Chair, House Finance Committee  
82 Smith Street, Room 35  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Letter of Support for H8389: An Act Relating To Education -- University Of Rhode Island

Dear Chair Abney:

I write to you in support of H8389: An Act Relating To Education -- University Of Rhode Island. This bill establishes the framework to create a medical school at the University of Rhode Island and provides an initial appropriation of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) as the first phase of a multi-year investment for the development of a medical school.

The need for a medical school at URI is clear. Our state currently experiences a primary care shortage, with many patients waiting months on end to see their doctor and more still who simply have gone extended periods of time without having a primary care physician. The shortage also puts strain on our state's existing primary care physicians, who are seeing larger and larger volumes of patients, diminishing the time and quality of care they can provide to any one patient. Doctors have a tremendous impact on our economy. Each physician trained at a URI medical school who remains in the state is estimated to have an annual \$2.2 million economic impact and support 15 jobs directly and indirectly.

In addition to creating a new pipeline of physicians, I am looking at this proposal through the lens of my office. As Chair of the state's Small Business Advocacy Council, I am pushing to address the succession planning crisis that we are facing. And it's easy to forget, but small and independent practices are small businesses like any other. If retiring physicians don't have a successor to run their practice, they close their doors or get rolled up into larger healthcare conglomerates. A College of Medicine at the University of Rhode Island is an essential step towards creating a sustainable pipeline of physicians who can take over the practices of their retiring peers.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote this bill favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

Sabina Matos  
Lieutenant Governor, State of Rhode Island  
CC: Representative Kathleen Fogarty