

May 5, 2026

VIA EMAIL ONLY HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

Rep. Marvin L. Abney, Chair
c/o Christopher O'Brien, Clerk
House Finance Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: HR 7059, making an appropriation of \$100,000 to the RI Office of Healthy Aging for the RI Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Dear Chair Marvin L. Abney and Honorable Committee Members:

As a member of the board of the Alliance for Better Long-Term Care and an attorney who represents those injured and killed as a result of nursing home negligence, I strongly support HR 7059.

As a Trial Lawyer, we often see cases where harm could have been avoided if advocates had the resources to address issues before they led to injury or wrongful death. This bill would provide necessary funds to the RI Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

In fact, the state appropriation for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has not increased in 15 years. During that time, our seniors in our nursing homes endured a worldwide pandemic, with many losing their lives. Increasingly, our nursing homes are managed and owned by national companies, not families and neighbors living in Rhode Island. The landscape has changed for our nursing home residents and their families, but the resources provided by the state to ensure one of its more vulnerable populations receive the best care have not kept up with these changes.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is the only office in Rhode Island whose sole duty is to represent the resident's interests. Providing this office an increase in funds is not only prudent, but necessary. *According to the RI Office of Health Aging, in Rhode Island, over 31% of residents are age 55 or older and by 2030, it is estimated that 1 in 4 Rhode Islanders will be 65*


or older. As our residents age, without an increase in funds to the Ombudsman, Rhode Island's nursing home population and their families will be left without sufficient resources to protect themselves from neglect and injury, and worse case, death.

Increased funds to support Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program will reduce the number of injuries from negligence and wrongful death. More importantly, it will lead to better outcomes for nursing home residents.

I respectfully ask that this committee recommend passage of HR 7059.

Thank you for your kind attention to this important bill.

Very truly yours,



Anthony R. Leone, II