



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

**Testimony in Support of 26-H 8182,
AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -
THE RHODE ISLAND MEDICAID REFORM ACT OF 2008**

House Committee on Finance

Hannah Stern - Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

May 5, 2026

Dear Chair Abney and honorable members of the House Committee on Finance:

In my capacity as the Director, Public Policy and Government Relations at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony **in support of House Bill H 8182**. PPSNE provided sexual and reproductive health care to nearly 10,000 Rhode Island patients last year and believes all people should have access to quality, affordable, and compassionate health care as a basic human right — regardless of who you are, where you live, your income, if you have health insurance or your immigration status.

As advocates for reproductive freedom, we believe that every individual has the right to full bodily autonomy and deserves the ability to make personal decisions about their body, life, and future, including if or when to start a family. As we have learned from our allies in the Reproductive Justice movement - a movement created by Black women in 1994 - every person is endowed with the human right to have children; to not have children; to parent the children one has in safe, sustainable communities; and to bodily autonomy.

It is our responsibility as a reproductive health care provider and advocate that our work be inclusive of ensuring both that people have access to not only abortion and contraceptive care, but additionally have equitable access to pregnancy care, and infertility evaluation, treatment, and fertility health care. The reality is that many families require fertility assistance to have children, yet the cost of this health care creates significant financial access concerns.

Current Rhode Island law requirements for coverage of fertility treatment *only* address private insurance providers, excluding Medicaid patients entirely. This bill is an important step in strengthening current law and expanding access to this essential health care.

H 8182 will address a critical reproductive health care equity issue by eliminating barriers to fertility care coverage for Medicaid patients and will ensure that this fertility health care insurance coverage is aligned with the medical standard of fertility care, which clearly includes LGBTQ+ and

single people, among others, so that more Rhode Island residents have the opportunity to build their family. Guaranteeing equity in coverage for fertility care is part of the fight for reproductive and economic justice in our state to ensure all people have the freedom and power to build their own families.

Family-building health care is an important aspect of reproductive health care for many people. Last year the Alabama Supreme Court ruling sparked chaos in Alabama for patients that rely on IVF to build their families and is the clearest demonstration yet of the many ways that anti-abortion laws, including “personhood” laws, threaten contraception, fertility care, and all sexual and reproductive health care. And despite President Trump releasing an Executive Order in February 2025 about the need to improve access to IVF, the order itself does nothing to make access to care more equitable or affordable.

Planned Parenthood understands how important it is for all people to have access to high-quality, nonjudgmental health care that affirms their identity, their family, and their sexuality — as well as the ability and resources to make their own health care decisions with dignity. With the current hostile political landscape for reproductive health, our state must do everything we can to stand for the fundamental right for people to be able to decide whether, when, and how to have children. Rhode Island has been a leader in passing policy to support all families and children including the Rhode Island Uniform Parentage Act (2020) and the Rhode Island Confirmatory Adoption Act (2023). We urge the committee and legislature to vote in support of H 8182 to improve fertility health care coverage and ensure that more Rhode Island residents have access to the essential medical care they need to build their families. Planned Parenthood will not stop fighting for the rights of all people to make their own decisions about their bodies, decide what their families look like, and live healthy and self-determined lives.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Stern', is positioned above the typed name.

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