



**Rhode Island Partnership
for Home Care**

Advancing quality healthcare at home

May 5, 2026

VIA EMAIL: housefinance@rilegislature.gov

Hon. Marvin Abney, Chairman
Committee on Finance
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bill 8218 — Full Funding of OHIC-Recommended Home Care Rate Increases, Medicaid Home Care Rate Floor and Restoration of Home Care Behavioral Health Training Program

Dear Chairman Abney,

On behalf of the Medicaid-contracted home care providers of the Rhode Island Partnership for Home Care, I express our strong support for House Bill 8218 and to respectfully urge your committee to propose fully funding the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) recommended rate increases in the State Fiscal Year 2027 (SFY27) budget.

Fully funding the OHIC recommended rate increases is essential to stabilizing our home care workforce. These recommendations reflect a data-driven assessment of the true cost of delivering care, including wages necessary to continue recruiting and retaining qualified licensed caregivers in a highly competitive labor market. Without full funding at the recommended rates for Medicaid-contracted home care services, providers will revert to periods of the past when barriers occurred in offering competitive wages and meaningful employment benefits, exacerbating workforce shortages and limiting access to care for vulnerable, homebound Rhode Islanders.

House Bill 8218 complements this effort by establishing a Medicaid rate floor that ensures managed care organizations (MCOs), such as Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island (NHPRI), United Healthcare of New England (UHC), Tufts Health Plan, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island, do not reimburse licensed home care, home nursing care and hospice providers contracted with the Rhode Island Medicaid Program below the fee-for-service (FFS) rates set by the General Assembly. This provision is critical to creating consistency and fairness across the State's Medicaid delivery system and preventing downward reimbursement pressure that undermines provider sustainability and beneficiary care.

In addition, House Bill 8218 restores the behavioral health training program for home care paraprofessionals, such as licensed nurse assistants (CNAs) and homemakers. Based at Rhode Island College (RIC), this specialized training program equips these frontline caregivers with the tools and resources needed to manage increasingly complex patient and client needs of vulnerable, homebound beneficiaries. Strengthening this workforce capacity improves quality of care while helping individuals remain safely at home longer, avoiding unnecessary hospitalizations and more costly facility-based care.

As a package, House Bill 8218 represents a coordinated and responsible approach to strengthening Rhode Island's home care providers serving Medicaid beneficiaries. These actions within the bill will stabilize the workforce, ensure fair and predictable reimbursement and support better outcomes for patients and clients while continuing to protect taxpayer resources.

We respectfully urge you to include all of the components within House Bill 8218 in the House Finance Committee's proposed SFY27 budget. We stand ready to provide any additional data or testimony that would assist your committee in its deliberations.

Thank you for your continued leadership and your longstanding support of Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Oliver

Nicholas Oliver, MPA, CAE, AAiP
Executive Director

cc: Members, House Committee on Finance