



May 5, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney
House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI

RE: Support for H 8404 – Children’s Medicaid Transformation Infrastructure Fund Act

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Tides Family Services in strong support of H 8404, the *Children’s Medicaid Transformation Infrastructure Fund Act*.

Tides Family Services serves children and families across Rhode Island with complex behavioral health and social service needs. We are committed to the State’s vision for Medicaid transformation and recognize the opportunity it presents to improve care coordination, accountability, and outcomes for the families we serve.

At the same time, I want to be candid about the very real operational and financial challenges that this transformation creates for community-based providers like Tides.

Structural and Financial Impact on Providers

The shift to a Medicaid-driven payment and service delivery model requires significant structural change within our organization. To meet new requirements, providers must invest in:

- New or enhanced Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems and billing platforms
- Data reporting and compliance infrastructure
- Workforce training and ongoing staff development
- Care coordination systems aligned with new expectations

These are not incremental adjustments—they are fundamental changes to how organizations operate.

At the same time, transitioning to a Medicaid reimbursement model introduces new financial risks. Providers must manage:

- Delays in reimbursement, often 60 to 90 days after services are delivered
- Denied or partially paid claims requiring resubmission and administrative follow-up
- Increased administrative costs associated with billing, compliance, and reporting

For an organization like ours, these dynamics create significant cash flow pressures, even as we are being asked to make substantial upfront investments in infrastructure.



A Shared Goal, But an Uneven Burden

Tides fully supports the goals of Medicaid transformation. We believe in building a more accountable, integrated, and outcomes-driven system of care.

However, it is critical to recognize that the burden of this transformation falls heavily on community-based providers. Without targeted support, even well-established organizations will face strain, and smaller providers may struggle to remain viable.

This is not just an organizational issue—it is a system issue. If community-based providers are unable to adapt, the State risks losing critical access points for children and families, particularly in underserved communities.

A Proven Approach: Infrastructure Investment

Rhode Island has successfully addressed similar challenges in the past. When the Executive Office of Health and Human Services implemented the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model, the State provided infrastructure funding to help providers build the capacity needed to meet new standards.

That investment recognized a simple but important reality: transformation requires upfront resources.

The Medicaid transformation now underway for children's services presents comparable demands. Providing infrastructure support through H 8404 is a practical, proven way to ensure that providers can successfully transition without disrupting care.

Conclusion

Tides Family Services stands ready to do the work required to meet the State's vision for Medicaid transformation. But we cannot do it alone.

H 8404 provides a necessary bridge—helping providers absorb the cost of transformation, stabilize operations during the transition, and ultimately deliver better outcomes for Rhode Island's children and families.

I respectfully urge you to support passage of this important legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to strengthening Rhode Island's system of care.

Sincerely,

Beth A. Bixby, LICSW
Chief Executive Officer
Tides Family Services