



Gateway Healthcare

**BROWN**Health  
UNIVERSITY

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May 5, 2026

Chairman Marvin Abney  
House Finance Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly

Cc: Members of the House Finance Committee

Re: Letter of Support – H 8417: Hillsgrove Clubhouse Program

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing in strong support of House Resolution H 8417, which would appropriate \$500,000 to Thrive Behavioral Health, Inc. to support the Hillsgrove Clubhouse Program. As a behavioral health leader at Gateway Healthcare, I have seen firsthand the essential role Hillsgrove plays for individuals living with severe and persistent mental illness.

Many Gateway clients rely on the Hillsgrove Clubhouse as their primary source of social connection and vocational development. The structure, peer support, and meaningful work opportunities offered through the clubhouse model are central to their stability and recovery. For these individuals, Hillsgrove is not simply a supplemental service but a core component of their ability to remain engaged and well in the community.

Importantly, many of our clients have participated in other day programs in the past yet consistently express a strong preference for Hillsgrove. They describe it as more person-centered and rehabilitative, emphasizing choice, dignity, and strengths rather than a purely clinical approach. This sense of belonging and purpose has a measurable impact on confidence, skill development, and long-term recovery.

As Rhode Island's only accredited clubhouse program, Hillsgrove fills a unique and irreplaceable role in the behavioral health continuum. Its services help reduce isolation, prevent psychiatric decompensation, and decrease reliance on higher-cost services such as emergency departments and inpatient hospitalization.

The recent loss of Medicaid reimbursement places this vital program at serious financial risk. The appropriation proposed in H 8417 would help stabilize and sustain a program that serves more than 165 Rhode Islanders statewide and supports some of the state's most vulnerable residents.



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I respectfully urge the House Finance Committee to support H 8417 and ensure the continued operation of the Hillsgrove Clubhouse Program. Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to recovery-oriented behavioral health care in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

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