



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

**Testimony in Support of 26-H 7689,
AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES - THE RHODE ISLAND WORKS PROGRAM
House Committee on Finance
Hannah Stern - Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
May 14, 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 7689**. 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.

This bill makes a simple and impactful change to the Rhode Island Works Program – rather than making an arbitrary distinction between naturalized or birthright citizens and lawful permanent residents by imposing a five-year waiting period for benefits on the latter, this legislation will ensure that all eligible residents for this critical program are able to access benefits immediately. This importantly provides more autonomy and economic stability for all members of the RI Works Program, and removes an unnecessary impediment to eligible individuals who are legally qualified but are not citizens.

In line with PPSNE’s dedication to fighting for policies that comprehensively protect the lives of all Rhode Islanders as a way of ensuring that our patients, and our communities, have the resources they need to live healthy, safe, and self-determined lives, we urge support for H 7689.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Hannah Stern
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
hannah.stern@ppsne.org