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The Honorable Marvin Abney
Chairman, House Finance Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for H8180 – Children’s Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS)

Chairman Abney and committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of H8180.

At Bradley Hospital, we care for children and youth experiencing acute behavioral health crises every day. Too often, emergency departments or inpatient hospitalization become the default response; not because they are always clinically appropriate, but because families lack timely alternatives.


Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) represent a critical and clinically appropriate alternative. These teams provide rapid, community-based intervention by meeting children and families in their homes or other natural environments. This approach allows for timely assessment, effective de-escalation, and immediate engagement in stabilization and follow-up care. From the perspective of a psychiatric hospital, MRSS is an essential component of a comprehensive continuum of care. These services align with evidence-based, trauma-informed practices and can reduce unnecessary emergency department utilization, prevent avoidable hospital admissions, and help maintain children safely in their homes and communities.

H8180 is particularly important because it establishes MRSS as a statewide, universally accessible service for all children and youth, regardless of insurance status. It also creates a coordinated, sustainable funding structure that ensures care is delivered based on clinical need rather than payer source. Without this type of braided funding model, access to crisis services remains inconsistent and fragmented, resulting in gaps in care that ultimately place greater strain on hospitals, emergency departments, and families.

We strongly urge the Committee to support H8180 to strengthen Rhode Island’s behavioral health system for children and families.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to Rhode Island’s youth.

Sincerely,



Henry T. Sachs III, MD
President