

May 14, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair, House Committee on Finance
Via email to: HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

Re: HB 8180, relating to mobile response and stabilization services (MRSS)

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (Blue Cross), I would like to express support for the services described in these proposals and interest in continued conversations on the language in the bill.

Blue Cross shares the interest of the sponsor, the Committee, and many others in supporting the mental well-being of Rhode Island's youth. The Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) model provides immediate access to care for children and youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Blue Cross fully implemented the MRSS benefit for our members.

Last session, Blue Cross worked collaboratively with the Assembly and advocates to enact the MRSS legislation. This year, we are similarly engaged in conversations with providers given the range of issues in this bill. Among the elements we support are:

- Clarifying the provisions of the program
- Expanding the eligibility of youth served by MRSS to up to age 21
- Providing this emergency care without prior authorization

Funding services through a "braided" model is of particular interest. MRSS recipients and/or their family might have coverage through a commercial plan, Medicaid, or might not have any coverage. We are working with providers on how to best define the obligations under this proposal and last year's enactment.

Blue Cross appreciates your consideration and welcomes conversations on these proposals.

Sincerely,

Richard Glucksman

Senior Government Relations Counsel