



Michael Sroczynski
President

May 12, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chairperson, House Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Support H.8205 Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver Amendment (BH Nursing Facility Access)

Dear Chairperson Abney,

On behalf of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) and our member hospitals, I am writing to express strong support for H.8205, which would authorize amendments to the State's Medicaid Section 1115 waiver to update the behavioral health per-diem add-on program for patients with complex behavioral health needs.

Hospitals support this proposal as a practical step to improve patient flow and better align care with patient needs across the healthcare continuum. As drafted, the original waiver approved by the General Assembly in 2021 established criteria that have proven difficult to operationalize—most notably, the requirement that patients be hospitalized for six months prior to qualifying for enhanced behavioral health supports in a nursing facility. In practice, this threshold has limited the use of the program and constrained access to appropriate post-acute placements.

H.8205 takes a more flexible and clinically grounded approach by broadening eligibility to patients who meet nursing facility level of care and have complex behavioral health needs that present barriers to placement. This change will better support timely transitions out of acute care settings and into more appropriate, specialized environments.

Improving access to appropriate post-acute care settings is an important component of maintaining an efficient and responsive healthcare system. Policies that help ensure patients receive care in the right setting support both patient outcomes and system stability.

HARI appreciates this committee's continued focus on improving access to care and reducing unnecessary administrative burdens, and we respectfully urge passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Tomasso", written over a thin horizontal line.

Lisa P. Tomasso
Senior Vice President