



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Honorable Susan Donovan
Chair
House Health & Human Services Committee
Room 135
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: 24H-7623

SUPPORT (FOR)

February 29, 2024

Dear Chairman Donovan,

I am writing on behalf of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS) to express our gratitude to Representative Tanzi for introducing H 7623, the Rhode Island Health Care Reform Act of 2024 – Health Insurance Oversight. We commend Representative Tanzi for her commitment to addressing critical issues within our healthcare system, particularly concerning prescription drug prior authorizations.

RIMS acknowledges the efforts made since the passage of last session's HB-5495-A, which mandated the establishment of a workgroup comprised of healthcare providers and health insurers, convened by the office of the health commissioner, to make recommendations regarding prior authorization policies. We appreciate the collaborative work facilitated by the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner in driving these reforms forward. While progress has been made, it is evident that more attention needs to be directed towards prescription drug prior authorizations, an area of concern for many healthcare practitioners.

According to a December 2022 survey conducted by the American Medical Association (AMA), a majority of practicing physicians continue to face challenges with prior authorizations, with 64% reporting harm to patients and 62% expressing difficulty in determining whether a prescription medication or medical service requires prior authorization. These findings underscore the urgency of addressing this issue to ensure the efficient delivery of care and minimize burdens on healthcare practices.¹

Therefore, we strongly urge you and your committee members to act favorably on H 7623. This legislation will play a crucial role in enhancing transparency and streamlining the prior authorization process, ultimately benefiting both patients and healthcare providers.

Established in 1812, RIMS has served as a leading advocate for the medical community in Rhode Island, striving to meet the evolving challenges of medical practice and uphold standards of quality patient care.

Should you require any additional information or have any questions regarding our testimony, please do not hesitate to contact us. We appreciate your attention to this matter and thank you for considering our perspective.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith, MD, MPH
President

¹ <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/prior-authorization-reform-progress-update.pdf>