



# RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

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

Re: 24H-7876

SUPPORT

March 19, 2024

Dear Chair Donovan,

The Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS) would like to thank Representative Tanzi for introducing H 7876, An Act Relating To Insurance -- Insurance Coverage For Mental Illness And Substance Use Disorders. This bill outlines the insurance coverage standards, protocols and guidelines for medically necessary treatment of individuals with mental health or substance abuse use disorders.

Physicians across Rhode Island are deeply committed to providing high-quality care to all of our patients, including those with mental health and substance use disorders. However, we are keenly aware of the challenges that many individuals face in accessing the treatment they need due to barriers such as limited insurance coverage and complex reimbursement processes.

This legislation presents a critical opportunity to address these barriers and improve access to care for individuals in Rhode Island who are struggling with mental health and substance use disorders. By establishing clear standards and guidelines for insurance coverage of medically necessary treatment, this bill will help ensure that patients receive the care they need in a timely and efficient manner.

Furthermore, by promoting evidence-based practices and aligning insurance coverage standards with best clinical practices, this legislation has the potential to improve outcomes for patients and reduce the overall burden of mental illness and substance abuse in our state.

On behalf of the physicians of Rhode Island, I urge you and your committee members to support this important legislation and take action to ensure its passage. By enacting this bill into law, Rhode Island can demonstrate its commitment to promoting equitable access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment and improving the health and well-being of all its residents.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith, MD, MPH  
President