



April 9, 2024

Honorable Rep. Susan Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Donovan and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

Please accept the Rhode Island Health Center Association's letter in opposition to House Bill 7884 that would prohibit gender transition procedures for all minors, use of public funds for that purpose, discipline for health care providers for providing same, a thirty (30) year statute of limitation, and right to a civil action for damages.

Transgender people face significant barriers to health care, including discrimination and denial of coverage for medically necessary treatments. House Bill 7884 would further undermine the ability of patients, families, and their health care providers to make decisions regarding essential medical care for transgender youth. Rolling back protections of health care services and insurance coverage undermines the progress made in ensuring equitable access to health care for all individuals, regardless of their gender identity. Transgender individuals, like all people, deserve to have their medical needs addressed in a manner that is supportive, affirming, and respectful of their identity. This includes access to gender-affirming medical care and protections for health care professionals who provide these services.

Rhode Island's eight Community Health Centers (CHCs) strive to create safe and affirming spaces for their patients. They provide inclusive care to over 200,000 individuals regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, income level, or ability to pay. By safeguarding the rights and dignity of patients, families, and the health care providers who offer transgender health care services, we can create an environment where all individuals, regardless of their gender identity, can access safe, affirming, and high-quality healthcare. We urge you to vote in opposition to House Bill 7884.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

M. Campbell

Melissa Campbell
Policy Manager

Rhode Island Health Center Association members include:
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc. ~ Comprehensive Community Action Program
East Bay Community Action Program~ Providence Community Health Centers
Thundermist Health Center ~ Tri-County Community Action Agency
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care ~ Wood River Health