

February 22, 2025

Re: Testimony in Support of Bill H-5351

Dear Chairperson and members of the HHS Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Bill H-5351. I have been practicing in the medical field in Rhode Island since the late 1980s, and throughout these years, I have witnessed many changes. As a practicing APRN in the state, I have recently observed a concerning decline in the number of providers, primarily due to reimbursement issues. This trend has significantly impacted patient access to care, leaving many without primary care providers and, as a result, forcing them to seek care in emergency departments. Not only does this lead to delays for patients requiring emergency care, but it also places an overwhelming burden on our emergency systems.

I firmly believe that any change to our scope of practice would have a detrimental and far-reaching impact on addressing the healthcare crisis in our state. Whether in general medicine or aesthetic care, narrowing our scope would hurt the citizens of Rhode Island. Nurse Practitioners (NPs) are highly educated and well-trained professionals who take our roles seriously. We are committed to providing high-quality care, and we continuously strive to meet the healthcare needs of our communities.

In my experience working in Emergency Medicine and managing my own practice, I have witnessed firsthand the strain on our emergency departments due to the shortage of available medical professionals. Every day, patients in my office express frustration over the difficulty in finding a primary care provider or securing an appointment, with wait times extending for months. This underscores the urgent need to address healthcare access issues in Rhode Island and to allow Nurse Practitioners to continue practicing at their current scope of practice without change.

I urge you to support Bill H-5351 to help alleviate the healthcare shortage and ensure that patients have timely access to the care they need.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Teresa M Maine APRN

Care New England Emergency Department Provider

Dot Medical Express, LLC Medical Director/Owner