

Written Testimony-Individual

To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: Nicole Siegert

Date: March 13, 2025

Re: House Bill H5861: Insurance Coverage for Licensed Certified Lactation Counselors

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today. Thank you to Representatives Stewart, Alzate, Cruz, Shallcross Smith, Kislak, Potter, McGaw, and Casimiro for sponsoring this bill.

My name is **Nicole Siegert, MD** and I'm writing in support of House Bill 5861.

I am a Family Physician who also delivers babies at Women and Infants Hospital and I care for pregnant women at Blackstone Valley Community Health Center. I also practice at the Providence Community Health Center.

Breastfeeding benefits mother and baby in numerous ways and over the course of a lifetime. Breastfeeding is difficult for many new mothers and requires support for most. Lactation services are offered in the hospital but are difficult to access for patients after discharge. Many fail to establish a successful breastfeeding pair and give up shortly after leaving the hospital. The above bill would make lactation services more accessible to patients, especially to patients from the underserved communities in Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls with limited modes of transportation, language barrier and possibly allow for in-home services.

I urge you to pass House Bill 5861 to ensure that lactation services are more readily accessible to patients especially from our underserved and vulnerable communities. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.