

**Template for Written Testimony-Individual
Rhode Island General Assembly**

To: House Health and Human Services Committee

From: **Shaylyn Forloney CPD**

Date: **March 13, 2025**

Re: House Bill 5861 - Insurance Coverage of 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, Fogarty, McGaw, Cruz, and Casimiro for sponsoring this bill.

My name is **Shaylyn Forloney CPD** and I'm writing in support of House Bill 5861. This bill requires insurance coverage of the services of Licensed Certified Lactation Counselors.

Beyond the myriad of maternal, infant, economic, and public health benefits of breastfeeding/chestfeeding a personal stand out for me in supporting this bill is the affordable access to in home care for families.

Four days after my second baby was born, I booked an appointment at the hospital I gave birth to meet with someone in lactation. Extremely exhausted and still physically deeply recovering from birth I took my baby to the appointment. It was important to me because when my first child was three weeks old I wound up in the ER for two days after passing out due to crippling back spasms, caused by improper breastfeeding positions. This time around I wanted to be proactive early on and refresh my memory of different supported positions.

I do not remember much from that appointment except feeling very frustrated that even though they welcomed me to bring any nursing "tools" I had—it was not my home. They did not show me positions on my couch, in my rocking chair, or in bed. They didn't see the space I was working with. Feeding a newborn is demanding of your time and body. There are only so many pillows in so many places that can be used to prop up an arm or shove behind an aching back. It would have been wonderful to have had insurance covered expert care for myself and baby in the comforts of my home.

I am also filled with excited anticipation that just like the Doula Bill, this covered care will lead to conversations in parenting circles so more people will know about the option of CLC support. I know that New-Mom-Me would have loved to have known about CLCs and would have benefited from one coming to my house before I wound up in the ER.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.