

April 1, 2025

Representative Susan Donovan  
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

**Re: Support for H5863**

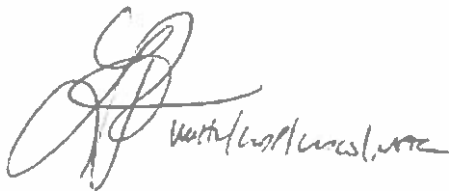
Dear Chair Donovan and Honorable Committee Members:

As Chief Operating Officer at VICTA and Policy Chair for the RI Association for Addiction Professionals, I am writing in strong support of H5863, which would ensure that Commercial health plans in RI increase reimbursement rates for outpatient behavioral health services annually based on the rate of inflation plus 5%.

The behavioral health infrastructure in Rhode Island has grappled with decades of cuts while demand for services and complexity of illness increases. Investing in our community-based services not only prevents unnecessary suffering, but it also ultimately saves money for the health plans and for our communities. When people have access to timely, appropriate care they are less likely to experience a crisis that results in the utilization of Emergency Departments or inpatient hospitalization.

Unfortunately, due to low reimbursement rates and high bureaucratic demands, many providers of behavioral health services have opted not to take insurance at all. By investing in our outpatient network through competitive and adaptive rates, we can expand access and improve outcomes for Rhode Islanders living with mental health and/or substance use disorders. I respectfully urge you to support H5863.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Peterson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lisa Peterson, LMHC/LCDP/LCDS/MAC