



April 23, 2025

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
Via: HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov

Re: H5848 - An Act Relating to Human Services – Community Health Centers

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

The Rhode Island Health Center Association supports House Bill 5848.

We thank Representative Hopkins for introducing the bill and acknowledge the bill's sponsors.

HB 5848 recognizes the importance of community health centers to both the RI Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS).

Community health centers are the vehicles through which many of RIDOH's initiatives are accomplished. Two examples are community health center participation in RIDOH's cancer screening and blood lead testing efforts.

EOHHS relies on the community health centers to provide high quality primary medical, behavioral, and dental care to 1 of every 3 Medicaid eligible individuals.

We support the bill's directive to both these agencies to work with the community health centers to identify ways to strengthen these vital safety-net providers.

We are very pleased to see the explicit mention of the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THC-GME), as we believe Rhode Island's primary care residency programs should shift to more community health centers. This bill and HB5526 will ensure Thundermist's THC - GME effort is funded.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Elena Nicoletta

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The 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