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David A. Balasco
Vice President

April 7, 2025

Representative Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chair
House Judiciary Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: H5500-Relating to Businesses and Professions - Confidentiality of Health Care Communications and Information Act

Dear Chair Craven:

We write in support of H.7448, An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Confidentiality of Health Care Communications and Information Act. Lifespan has worked with the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) over the years on this issue and agree that this specific change to the privacy statute is a necessity. Without this statutory amendment, our hospitals are prohibited from providing BHDDH complete medical records that are often needed during abuse, neglect, mistreatment, etc. investigations. In many instances, BHDDH is unable to obtain the patient's or their next of kin's (when the patient has died) authorization or cannot do so because a patient is mentally or physically incapacitated. Importantly, BHDDH would join the RI Department of Health in having this vital authority to help protect Rhode Islanders and alleviate the administrative burdens the current law creates for both BHDDH and our staff while maintaining an avenue of judicial appeal.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Balasco".

David A. Balasco, Esq.
Vice President Government Relations