

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Rhode Island General Assembly

April 8, 2025

Re: Testimonies in

- **Support** of House bill H6174 PROTECTIONS OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS ACT
- **Opposition** to House bill H5661 titled DEATH BY WRONGFUL ACT
- **Opposition** to House bill H5296 titled BORN-ALIVE INFANT PROTECTION ACT

Dear Chairman Craven and members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Jacqueline Zhang, a student at Brown University and reproductive rights advocate. I am testifying against H5661 and H5296. Year after year, the Born Alive Infant Protection Act (BAIPA) is reintroduced to the committee with the same medically inaccurately written language and lousy definitions incongruent with the CDC guidelines. According to the CDC, “For the purpose of surveillance, legal induced abortion is defined as “an intervention performed within the limits of state and jurisdiction law by a licensed clinician intended to terminate a suspected or known intrauterine pregnancy and that does not result in a live birth.”¹ This act’s disregard of the “infant” status of gestation is medically inaccurate. In fact, most of the bill language can be traced back to the Americans United for Life’s template, with the same nonsensical definition of medical terminologies not based in science.² The mere act of reintroducing this ill-willed bill year after year is a testament to the laziness of the sponsors.

But what’s more troubling to me than the bill language and inaccuracies is the history of BAIPA across the country. A federal BAIPA act was passed on March 12, 2002 and has since then inspired an anti-abortion movement in the state codifying BAIPA into state laws. Today, more than half of the states have some elements of BAIPA already in place, Rhode Island included. We already have robust legal protections for infants born alive under Rhode Island General Laws §11-9-18 “§ 11-9-18. Care of babies born alive during attempted abortions,” which mandates appropriate care to all infants born alive.³

There is a movement across the country against our bodily freedom and legislators are making care inaccessible by punishing medical providers for providing life-saving care. Rhode Island does not have to be part of it. I urge you to not only vote NO on bill H5661 and H5296, but to support and champion bills like H6174 that protects our healthcare provider’s right to practice medicine and Rhode Islander’s access to quality reproductive medical care. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify on these bills. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Zhang

Student at Brown University

¹ CDC, “CDC’s Abortion Surveillance System FAQs,” Reproductive Health, November 20, 2024, .

² “Born-Alive Infant Protection Act, Model Legislation and Policy Guide for the 2018 Legislative Year,” Americans United for Life, 2019, .

³ Rilegislature.gov, 2025, .