



Michael Sroczynski
President

February 25, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Oppose H.7749

Dear Chairperson McEntee,

The Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) and its members oppose H.7749, introduced by Representative Craven, which would repeal Rhode Island's collateral source rule in medical malpractice actions.

R.I. Gen. Laws § 9-19-34.1 permits defendants to introduce evidence of collateral benefits received by a plaintiff and requires the court to reduce an award accordingly. Repeal of this provision would eliminate that safeguard and increase malpractice exposure by preventing consideration of payments already made through insurance or other benefits.

This statute was enacted as part of Rhode Island's Medical Malpractice Reform Act in response to a healthcare liability crisis and was reaffirmed during the 1980s when the Medical Malpractice Joint Underwriting Association faced insolvency. Today, Rhode Island again faces significant instability in the professional liability market. Commercial carriers have reduced participation, and many hospitals are forced to rely on self-insurance due to limited coverage options.

Section 9-19-34.1 provides a measured and targeted protection that helps ensure damage awards reflect actual economic loss rather than amounts billed. Repealing it would increase litigation risk and financial strain at a time when hospitals are already navigating workforce shortages, rising costs, and reimbursement challenges.

Now is not the time to remove long-standing structural protections that support system stability. HARI respectfully urges the Committee to oppose H.7749.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continuing to work with Representative Craven and the Committee to strengthen Rhode Island's healthcare system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Tomasso", written over a horizontal line.

Lisa P. Tomasso
Senior Vice President