



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT TO H7185

TO: House Judiciary Committee  
From: Kelly Nevins, CEO, Women's Fund of Rhode Island  
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Women's Fund of Rhode Island invests in women and girls through research, advocacy, grantmaking, and strategic partnerships designed to achieve gender equity through systemic change. Our organization connects with nearly 10,000 people, primarily women, across Rhode Island. We strongly support H7185.

H7185 provides that the prescription label for medication abortion drugs may include the name of the dispensing healthcare practice instead of the individual provider's name. This is a narrow, practical, and necessary update to Rhode Island law that strengthens protections for providers while preserving safe and equitable access to abortion care.

### **1. Protecting Providers Protects Patients**

Medication abortion, including the use of mifepristone and misoprostol, is a safe, evidence-based, and widely used method of care. Yet in the post-Dobbs environment, providers across the country face harassment, doxing, threats of violence, and legal intimidation for delivering lawful medical services.

Allowing the medical practice name, rather than the individual prescriber's name, to appear on a medication abortion label is a commonsense safeguard. It does not alter medical standards of care, accountability, or pharmacy practices. It simply reduces the risk that individual clinicians will be targeted for providing legal healthcare in Rhode Island.

If we want providers to continue offering abortion care in our state, we must ensure they can do so without fear for their personal safety.

### **2. Ensuring Continued Access in a Hostile National Climate**

Rhode Island has taken important steps to protect reproductive freedom, including codifying abortion rights and passing shield protections for providers facing out-of-state legal threats. H7185 builds on that framework by addressing a specific vulnerability in prescription labeling.

We know that many states have enacted bans and restrictions that attempt to reach beyond their borders. In this climate, even seemingly small data points, like a provider's name attached to a prescription, can be weaponized. As we have argued in prior testimony related to data privacy and provider protections, safeguarding personal information is essential to protecting bodily autonomy and access to care.

Without adequate protections, providers may limit services or leave the state altogether. At a time when Rhode Island already faces healthcare workforce shortages, we cannot afford to create additional risk for the clinicians who provide essential reproductive healthcare.

### **3. Equity and Safety for Vulnerable Communities**

Access to medication abortion is particularly important for low-income individuals, rural residents, survivors of intimate partner violence, and those who cannot easily travel for in-person procedures. Medication abortion allows patients to receive care privately and safely.

However, stigma and political hostility surrounding abortion disproportionately affect marginalized communities. When providers face heightened risk, access shrinks, especially for those already navigating systemic barriers.

H7185 strengthens Rhode Island's commitment to health equity by ensuring that legal, evidence-based care remains available and that providers are not unnecessarily exposed to harassment or retaliation.

### **4. A Targeted, Responsible Policy**

Importantly, this bill does not weaken oversight or clinical standards. Pharmacies and healthcare systems will continue to maintain appropriate internal records and regulatory compliance. The legislation simply permits the prescription label to reflect the healthcare practice rather than the individual dispenser.

This is a modest but meaningful step that aligns with Rhode Island's broader commitment to protecting healthcare providers delivering lawful care.

### **Conclusion**

Reproductive freedom is not meaningful without access. And access is not sustainable if providers are placed at unnecessary risk. H7185 is a prudent, narrowly tailored safeguard that protects clinicians, stabilizes our healthcare workforce, and ensures that Rhode Islanders can continue to access safe, legal medication abortion without disruption.

Women's Fund of Rhode Island respectfully urges the passage of H7185.

### **About Women's Fund of Rhode Island**

For over 25 years, Women's Fund of Rhode Island has worked to build a Rhode Island where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. We advance gender equity through research, policy advocacy, leadership training, and community investment. Our work has informed major legislative victories, including paid family leave expansion, fair pay protections, and equitable access to reproductive health care. We have trained thousands of leaders and invested over \$1.5 million in local organizations driving change. Learn more at [www.wfri.org](http://www.wfri.org).