

John McDaid

H7357

Support

Dear Chair McEntee and honorable members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

My name is John McDaid, and I am from Portsmouth, Rhode Island. I am a member of Rhode Island Atheists, an affiliated organization of the Rhode Island Coalition for Reproductive Freedom. I am testifying in strong support of House Bill 7357, the Reproductive Health and Gender-Affirming Healthcare Data Privacy Act.

Civil liberties do not exist in the abstract. They require infrastructure – legal, institutional, and technical – to remain meaningful in practice. H7357 builds that infrastructure for one of the most intimate domains of human life: personal health decisions.

The right to make reproductive and gender-affirming health decisions without state interference is hollow if the data trail of those decisions can be harvested, aggregated, and weaponized against the people who made them.

This is not a theoretical concern. The current federal administration has demonstrated both the appetite and the operational capacity for aggressive surveillance of populations it has targeted for political reasons. Your goal in the General Assembly should be first and foremost to protect your constituents.

H7357 closes a key gap for Rhode Island residents seeking reproductive and gender-affirming care. Data privacy is not a technical annex to reproductive freedom. It is a precondition for it.

I urge a favorable vote on H7357. Thanks for all you do for our state.

John G. McDaid
Portsmouth