



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

**Testimony in Support of 26-H 7652,
AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE - SENTENCE AND EXECUTION
House Committee on Judiciary
Hannah Stern - Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
April 2, 2026**

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

In my capacity as the Director, Public Policy and Government Relations at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony **in support of House Bill 7652**. PPSNE provided sexual and reproductive health care to nearly 10,000 Rhode Island patients last year and believes all people should have access to quality, affordable, and compassionate health care as a basic human right — regardless of who you are, where you live, your income, if you have health insurance or your immigration status.

As advocates for reproductive freedom, PPSNE is proud to support policy that ensures that families have the capability to care for one another as needed, and that criminal justice measures do not unduly complicate or impair family caregiving infrastructure. This legislation would provide an avenue for defendants to submit a “family impact statement” which provides context to the impact that a defendant’s incarceration would have on their children, highlighting the reverberating complications that the incarceration of a parent can have on both their children and communities.

No matter how long a period of incarceration is, involvement in the criminal justice system can have profound impacts on a family’s economic stability, housing stability, emotional and mental health, and more, all of which comprise tenets of full reproductive freedom. For incarcerated parents, the stakes are only higher – to give just one example, a Marshall Project report indicated that parental rights were terminated entirely for 1 in 8 parents whose children went into the foster care system due to their prison sentences.¹ The impact of incarceration on parents additionally disproportionately impacts women. Women in state prisons are more likely to be a parent of a minor child; women are more likely to be

living with their children before their incarceration; and women who are incarcerated are more likely to be the solo parent in a single-parent household.²

With the discretion of the court, this legislation seeks to ameliorate the collateral impacts that incarceration and criminal justice policy has on family structures and the ability for parents to provide for their children. In line with PPSNE's dedication to fighting for policies that comprehensively protect the lives of all Rhode Islanders as a way of ensuring that our patients, and our communities, have the resources they need to live healthy, safe, and self-determined lives, we urge support for H 7652.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Stern', is positioned above the typed name.

Hannah Stern
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
hannah.stern@ppsne.org