



Michael Sroczynski  
President

March 5, 2026

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese  
Chair, House Committee on Labor  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Oppose H.7440

Dear Chairman Corvese,

On behalf of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) and our member hospitals and health systems, we write to express opposition to H.7440, which would allow workers who are on strike or involved in a labor dispute to collect unemployment benefits.

Hospitals in Rhode Island respect the collective bargaining process and maintain open and collaborative relationships with their workforce. However, this legislation would significantly alter the balance of that process by allowing unemployment insurance benefits to be paid during a strike or labor dispute. Unemployment insurance was designed to provide temporary financial support to individuals who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. Extending those benefits to individuals who voluntarily withhold their labor during a strike fundamentally changes the purpose of the unemployment insurance system.

Hospitals operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and must maintain continuous staffing to ensure patients receive safe and timely care. Labor disputes in the healthcare setting already create complex operational and financial challenges. Allowing unemployment benefits during a strike would increase pressure on employers during negotiations and could prolong disputes, creating instability for healthcare providers responsible for delivering essential services.

Rhode Island's unemployment insurance trust fund is also intended to support workers who are involuntarily unemployed. Expanding eligibility in this manner would increase costs to the system and ultimately to employers who fund it.

For these reasons, HARI respectfully urges the Committee to oppose H.7440.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

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

Lisa P. Tomasso  
Senior Vice President