



March 5, 2026

The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, Chairman
House Labor Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H.7965, An Act Relating to Health and Safety - Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund

Dear Chairman Corvese,

The undersigned members of the Rhode Island Business Coalition oppose the passage of H.7965, An Act Relating to Health and Safety Catastrophic Illness in Children Relief Fund.

This bill creates a fund to financially assist families of children with grave illnesses. While the goal of assisting families with health challenges is worthy, H.7965 relies on revenues collected through a new \$1.50 per employee tax on businesses.

As the business community faces labor shortages, inflationary costs and an uncertain economy, this is not the time to create new state programs and require companies to fund them. The legislature last session enacted what amounts to a new four dollar per member per month assessment paid by the state's employers.

As of December, 2025, the Department of Labor and Training's Non-farm Employment Report showed 513,700 individuals employed in Rhode Island. Using that employment number, we believe this program will take over \$770,000 out of the hands of Rhode Island businesses – monies needed to continue to employ Rhode Islanders.

For these reasons, we oppose the passage of H.7965.

Sincerely,

Associated Builders and Contractors – Rhode Island Chapter

David Chenevert, Chairman, Rhode Island Business Coalition

The Rhode Island Business Coalition represents 50 industries and 6,280 businesses that employ 231,200 people throughout Rhode Island.

East Greenwich Chamber of Commerce

National Federation of Independent Business

Rhode Island Business Group on Health

Rhode Island Hospitality Association

Rhode Island Marine Trade Association

Rhode Island Staffing Association

Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit Regulations Committee

Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit Tax and Budget Committee

cc. House Labor Committee members