



DATE: March 5, 2026

TO: The Honorable Arthur J. Corvese, Chair
Members, House Labor Committee

FROM: Carol Costa, SACRI Executive Director

RE: H7968, RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- TEMPORARY DISABILITY INSURANCE -- GENERAL PROVISIONS Introduced By: Representatives Giraldo, Alzate, Cruz, Donovan and Morales.

On behalf of SACRI, I am pleased to support H7968 to amend provisions to the state's Temporary Disability and Temporary Caregiver Insurance laws.

SACRI's mission is to advocate for policies and programs to improve the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders which includes support for family caregivers. Rhode Island has been a leader in passing family-friendly laws and SACRI is proud to have been in the forefront of advocating for creating the state Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) law in 2014 when R.I. became one of only a few states with such a law. We also supported the gradual extension of the leave to 8 weeks starting in 2026. Our TCI law is important for all our families to thrive -- both families with children and those caring for older adults and persons with disabilities. As people age, they tend to have greater healthcare needs and often must rely on family members – children, spouses, siblings and partners, and at times friends to assist with their care. It is critical for adults in the workforce including the 21% of persons age 65+ who are employed to be able to take time off when they need to care for a loved one. Currently, grandchildren are not included in our TCI law. It is important to address this omission as many grandparents are caring for their grandchildren. If they are in the workforce, it is important they are able to use TCI to assist their grandchildren acute hospitalizations or for those needing rehabilitative care at home. We are pleased that H7968 addresses this omission by amending the bill to include grandchildren. The bill also includes “care recipients” (persons for whom an employee is responsible for providing or arranging for health and safety related care. This could be a sibling or a non-relative partner. In addition, the bill gradually increases the number of weeks from 8 to 10 by January 2027 and to 12 weeks by January 2028. A final provision in the bill is to allow those who are self-employed to become enrolled in the program. They would need to meet quarterly contribution and reporting requirements as established by department regulation.

We appreciate the changes in the law being considered to enhance our TCI program as a way to continue to support RI caregivers and our families. We ask that you vote to recommend its passage to the full house.