



Testimony in Support

An Act Relating To Labor And Labor Relations -- Temporary Disability Insurance -

Mar 5, 2026

The Latino Policy Institute (LPI) strongly supports House Bill 7968, which would expand Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) program to ensure that all workers, especially those earning low wages, can take time off to care for loved ones. At LPI, we are committed to advancing policies that promote economic equity and support the well-being of Latino communities across our state. H7968 reflects those priorities.

In the last few years, the General Assembly has recognized the importance of expanding access to Rhode Islanders to paid family leave benefits by increasing wage replacement in 2025 and gradually increasing the number of weeks available to people. However, this legislation seeks to bring our state in line with several other states and provide families with 12 weeks of paid leave. H7968 addresses this core equity issue—ensuring that all workers, regardless of income, can take time to care for a newborn, a parent, a grandparent, or a seriously ill family member.

We also commend the bill's expanded definition of family, allowing individuals to take leave to care for grandchildren and care recipients. This change is essential for communities where caregiving networks extend beyond the traditional nuclear family. It also supports LGBTQ individuals, former foster youth, and those aging without close kin. Expanding eligibility makes TCI more inclusive and reflective of Rhode Islanders' lived realities.

Paid family leave is not a luxury; it is a necessity for working families. HB-7968 strengthens our state's caregiving infrastructure, promotes healthier families and communities, and affirms that no one should choose between caring for a loved one and earning a paycheck. We urge you to pass this legislation and continue building a Rhode Island where everyone has the freedom to care.

Marcela Betancur

Executive Director

Latino Policy Institute