



Rhode Island Health Care Association

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Testimony in Opposition – HB7772 (2026) Legislation Requiring Overtime Pay for Healthcare Professionals Working Sundays and Holidays

Chairperson and Members of the Committee:

My name is John Gage, and I am the President of the Rhode Island Health Care Association (RIHCA). Our membership represents approximately 80 percent of the nursing facility profession in Rhode Island, and this testimony is submitted on their behalf.

RIHCA respectfully opposes this legislation, which would require healthcare workers and medical direct support professionals employed in healthcare facilities to receive time-and-one-half pay for all work performed on Sundays and holidays.

While we fully support the dedicated workforce that cares for Rhode Island’s most vulnerable residents, this proposal would impose a significant unfunded mandate on healthcare providers that already operate under severe financial pressure.

Nursing facilities operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and unlike many industries, our facilities cannot simply close or reduce services on weekends or holidays. Care must be provided continuously to residents who rely on these services for their daily health and safety.

Unlike hospitals and many other healthcare sectors, nursing facilities rely heavily on Medicaid reimbursement, which typically covers the vast majority of residents. Medicaid reimbursement rates are set by the state and do not automatically adjust to account for new labor mandates such as the one proposed in this legislation. As a result, facilities would be required to absorb these additional costs without any corresponding increase in funding.

Given the current workforce shortages and financial instability affecting long-term care providers, imposing additional mandatory premium pay requirements could have unintended consequences, including:

- Increased financial strain on facilities already operating with very narrow margins
- Reduced flexibility in staffing and scheduling
- Further pressure on providers struggling to maintain access to care for Rhode Island’s elderly and medically complex population

RIHCA strongly believes that supporting the healthcare workforce must be done in a sustainable and comprehensive manner, including addressing reimbursement rates and workforce

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development. Unfortunately, this legislation would place the entire financial burden of this policy change on providers without addressing the underlying funding challenges.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island Health Care Association respectfully urges the Committee to hold this legislation for further study.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John E. Gage", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John E. Gage, MBA, NHA
President & CEO
Rhode Island Health Care Association