



April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Written Testimony for Public Hearing  
House Labor Committee  
Re: Testimony in Support of H-7361 with proposed Sub A

Dear Chairman Corvese and members of the committee,

The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island **strongly supports House Bill 7361 with the proposed Sub-A**, which grants organizing rights to direct support professionals in the self-directed program.

The Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the approximately 20,000 Jews in our state, as well as the broader Rhode Island community. Together, we bring Jewish tradition and values to life through meaningful action. Our work is guided by core principles, including *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world, and *Hineni*, standing with others so no one stands alone. These values inform all our work, including our support for this bill.

In Rhode Island, home-based caregivers—Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) and Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)—provide essential hands-on care that allows people to live independently in their communities. While they perform similar work, only PCAs were granted the right to organize and collectively bargain in 2023. DSPs in the self-directed ID/DD program still do not have those same rights. H-7361 with the proposed Sub A addresses that gap by extending a model already used for PCAs to DSPs. Importantly, it does so without changing the core structure of self-direction. Participants will continue to hire, fire, schedule, and direct their own care, while the state maintains its role in funding and setting program parameters.

This bill does not take authority away from participants. Instead, it gives workers a pathway to advocate for better wages and working conditions, something they currently lack. That gap contributes to workforce instability, including high turnover and difficulty recruiting caregivers. Supporting this bill is a step toward strengthening the workforce and improving consistency of care. When caregivers are better supported, the individuals who rely on them benefit as well.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass this legislation.

Sincerely,  
Emily Gaudreau  
Director, Community Advocacy and Engagement