

## **Official Testimony for H 7361**

**TO:** House Committee on Labor

**FROM:** Myles Brawn-Husband

**DATE:** March 4, 2026

**RE: OPPOSITION** to H 7361 – Quality Self-Directed Supports Act of 2026

**Statement of Concern:** I am writing to express my strong opposition to **H 7361**. While the title suggests a focus on quality, the actual mechanics of this bill threaten the fundamental principles of the "Self-Directed" model in Rhode Island: individual choice, flexibility, and the sanctity of the home-based care environment.

**Key Points of Harm: \* Erosion of Employer Authority:** The hallmark of self-direction is the participant's ability to act as the "Employer of Record." By introducing collective bargaining into this model, H 7361 inserts a third-party intermediary into the private relationship between a person with a disability and their chosen caregiver. This fundamentally undermines the autonomy that self-direction was designed to provide.

- **Reduction in Care Hours:** Any move toward a standardized, unionized structure within the self-directed program will inevitably increase administrative overhead and costs. Without a guaranteed, dollar-for-dollar increase in the individual resource allocations (the "budget") for participants, these costs will result in a direct reduction in the actual hours of care a person receives.
- **Privacy of the Home:** Self-directed care is a deeply personal service that happens within our private residences. Forcing families into a collective bargaining framework effectively treats a private home-based support system like a regulated industrial workplace, which is an inappropriate and harmful shift for this unique model of care.

**Conclusion:** Self-direction is one of the most successful, person-centered programs in Rhode Island because it is individualized. H 7361 attempts a "one-size-fits-all" solution that will only serve to limit options and increase costs for those who can least afford it. I urge the committee to vote no on this matter. Thank you