House Special Legislation Committee
Testimony in Support of House Bill 5376

TO: Rep. Karen Alzate, Chair,
               Rep. Grace Diaz, First Vice Chair,
               Rep. John J. Lombardi, Second Vice Chair,
               & Members of the House Special Legislation Committee

FROM: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

DATE: April 9, 2025

RE: Support for House Bill 5376

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action network (ACS CAN) is the non-partisan, non-profit advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. We advocate for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone.

On behalf of ACS CAN, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 5376, which would allow for the creation of a special license plate to raise awareness for colon cancer, with part of the proceeds from the sale of each plate going to support the Partnership to Reduce Cancer in Rhode Island (PRCRI).

We would also like to thank Chairwoman Donovan for introducing this bill and elevating the issue of colon cancer, the fourth most diagnosed cancer in the Ocean State. In 2021, ACS CAN was proud to champion the Maryellen Goodwin Colorectal Cancer Awareness Act, which in-part eliminated cost-sharing for colorectal cancer screenings. While colorectal cancer incidence and morality rates have generally declined, especially in those 50 and older, there remains a concerning increase in younger adults facing more advanced-stage diagnoses of colon cancer in Rhode Island.[1,2]

As Rhode Island's state-wide cancer coalition, PRCRI has been making tremendous strides in cancer prevention and health equity throughout the Rhode Island. The Partnership works closely with the Comprehensive Cancer Control, Women's Cancer Screening, and Colorectal Cancer Prevention Programs at the Rhode Island Department of Health to bring evidence-based programs and resources to the community. Their areas of work include:

- **Prevention**: The Partnership strives to share information on programs that are available to practitioners and individuals to learn more about their ability to reduce the incidence of cancer and the associated risk factors by implementing primary prevention strategies. These programs offer specific learning and resources for anyone trying to address health and wellness initiatives.

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[1] Rhode Island Department of Health, Rhode Island Cancer Registry. The Burden of Colorectal Cancer in Rhode Island. 2024. https://health.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur1006/files/publications/databriefs/2024-colorectal-cancer.pdf
[2] American Cancer Society. Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures. 2023-2025. https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures-2023.pdf

- **Screening & Early Detection**: The Partnership facilitates screening and early detection of cancer in Rhode Island through education and increasing access to screening tests.

- **Treatment**: The Partnership works closely with the Rhode Island cancer centers to increase access to optimal treatment plans for cancer patients.

- **Survivorship**: The Partnership strives to improve cancer survivors' quality of life from the time of diagnosis until end-of-life by providing resources and sharing lived experiences of patients.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass House Bill 5376 to help raise awareness on colon cancer and to help support PRCRI in their mission *to prevent cancer and improve the quality of life for all Rhode Islanders living with cancer*.

Please feel free to contact ACS CAN's Rhode Island Government Relations Director, Ryan T. Strik, at ryan.strik@cancer.org or at (401) 259-1052 for any additional questions or information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ryan T. Strik
Rhode Island Government Relations Director,
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network