

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND



Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals

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April 24, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley, Chairman
House Committee on State Government & Elections
State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: 2025 – H 6165 & H 6188– An Act Relating To State Affairs And Government -- State Police

Dear Chair Shanley:

I am writing regarding **H 6165 & H 6188** which would create the PURPLE alert system to aid in the search for a missing adult with a serious physical, behavioral health, neurological or medical condition.

As the agency responsible for administration of the state's systems of care for individuals who have serious intellectual and or developmental disabilities and for individuals with substance use and behavioral health disorders, BHDDH strongly supports efforts to ensure their safety and well-being, especially during times of crisis or emergencies.

Restricting the authority to demonstrate that the individual has a qualifying condition to the person's "family, legal guardian, long-term care ombudsman or long-term care facility where such person resides" in H 6165, and "family, legal guardian, caregiver, medical treatment provider, or long-term care facility where such person resides" in H 6188, is problematic in situations where the individual may not reside in a long-term care facility, where the individual's family may not be available, and/or where the individual may not have a legal guardian. Any appropriate behavioral healthcare, intellectual or developmental disability (I/DD), and/or medical service provider, and in some cases, BHDDH if the law were written to permit it, could be granted the authority to provide the documentation required to demonstrate that the individual both has a qualifying condition and that the lack of knowledge of the individual's whereabouts places the individual's immediate safety and well-being in jeopardy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these bills. BHDDH will make ourselves available to further discuss any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Richard Leclerc
Director

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
The Honorable Tina L. Spears
The Honorable Christopher G. Paplauskas
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy