

January 15, 2026

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
House Committee on State Government and Elections
82 Smith Street, Providence, RI, 02903

SUPPORT H7007

Dear Chairman Shanley and House Committee on State Government and Elections,

On behalf of the Community Provider Network of Rhode Island, I respectfully share my strong support for House Bill 7007.

This bill ensures that eligible Rhode Islanders living with disabilities can continue to access electronically transmitted mail ballots; a proven and essential tool for accessible civic participation. It solidifies the right of voters with disabilities to receive and return ballots electronically under secure and federally compliant standards.

For individuals with significant physical, mobility, or health challenges, accessing traditional in-person voting or standard mail ballots can present real barriers. Electronic transmission is a matter of **equal access and inclusion in our democratic process**. By ensuring continued electronic ballot access, this bill upholds the values of autonomy and full civic engagement for all Rhode Islanders.

For many Rhode Islanders with disabilities, voting is not simply a matter of choosing to drive to a polling place and filling out a ballot. This experience can be shaped by significant physical, sensory, and health-related barriers. Arranging transportation to a polling place, handling paper ballots, or relying on others to assist with voting can compromise independence, privacy, and dignity. Electronic ballot access allows people with disabilities to participate in elections on equal footing with their peers, exercising their right to vote privately, independently, and without unnecessary obstacles. H 7007 recognizes that true civic participation requires systems designed to include everyone.

CPNRI's 35 member organizations support individuals with disabilities across the state. We see firsthand how seemingly small structural obstacles can disproportionately impact people with disabilities. H7007 removes one such barrier, empowering our community members to



participate fully and independently in elections.

For these reasons, we urge the Committee to vote favorably on H7007 and continue Rhode Island's leadership in accessible voting rights.

Thank you for your consideration. Please reach out if I can be of help in any way on this issue.

Grace Duffy

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