



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

**Testimony in Support of 26-H 7236,  
AN ACT RELATING TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY -  
THE EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT AND BUDGET EQUITY IMPACT ACT  
House Committee on State Government & Elections  
Hannah Stern - Director, Public Policy and Government Relations  
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England  
January 27, 2026**

Chair Shanley and honorable members of the House Committee on State Government & Elections, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) **with support for House Bill 7236**. Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) provided sexual and reproductive health care to nearly 10,000 Rhode Island patients last year. Planned Parenthood believes all people should have access to quality, affordable, and compassionate health care as a basic human right — regardless of who you are, where you live, your income, if you have health insurance, or your immigration status.

Reproductive freedom is achieved when all people have full autonomy over their bodies and their lives. This not only includes access to health care, but the mitigation of policy issues which impact community and individual wellbeing – such as racial disparities, disparities for individuals with disabilities, gender disparities, and more – with the goal of supporting equity in all institutions. For these reasons, we strongly support H 7236, which will establish a pilot program for the use of Equity Impact Statements in legislative work and incorporate considerations of policy impact on protected classes to ensure that discriminatory patterns are not being perpetuated by new state statutes.

This legislation creates clarity and transparency for both legislators and community members about the predicted impact of a drafted bill; it ensures a fuller scope of understanding as to the nuanced realities of policy implementation; and, most importantly, it will solidify in the purview of our legislature the intention that state statute should actively be seeking to promote and codify more equitable practices. We urge Rhode Island to join two of its neighbors, Connecticut and Maine, in thoughtfully centering the ways that legislative work and state law may lead in campaigns to correct historic disparities and prioritize the wellbeing of all communities.

Planned Parenthood is proud to support and fight for policies which protect the lives of all people, and which ensure that our patients and our communities have the resources to live healthy, safe, and self-determined lives. For these reasons, we strongly urge committee support for H 7236.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Stern', written in a cursive style.

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