



Testimony of Matthew Netto, AARP Rhode Island
In support of House Bill 7029
House Health and Human Services Committee
February 10, 2026

Chairwoman Donovan and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

AARP is a nonpartisan, social mission organization with 38 million members nationwide and nearly 125,000 members here in Rhode Island. We advocate on behalf of issues that impact older adults, and we appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for permitting a certified foot care nurse to provide certain at-home foot care, including routine foot and nail care including nail clipping, as proposed in Representative Boylan's House Bill 7029.

According to the United States Center For Disease Control and Prevention, annually, there are about 3 million emergency department visits due to older people falling and injuring themselves.¹ One risk factor for falls in older adults is foot pain. General pain when walking, calluses, long toe deformities, ulcers, and nail deformities increase balance difficulty and risk of falling.² Routine foot care isn't cosmetic for older adults — it's preventive health care that can stop small problems from turning into big problems.

Routine foot care not only helps with fall prevention but also with infection prevention and mobility. Older adults with vision impairment, mobility challenges, arthritis, and cognitive changes may have difficulty performing routine foot care. When a person's feet hurt they walk less, exercise less, and leave the house less. Even a small cut from an overgrown nail can lead to a serious infection. Routine foot care allows for proper maintenance and monitoring, which in turn helps to prevent future medical problems.

Representative Boylan's bill would allow a certified foot care nurse to provide routine foot care in the setting of one's home. Facing a clinical workforce shortage, this bill would increase care in our state. Certified foot care nurses and foot care specialists play a critical role in providing assessments, patient education, and care. These specialists collaborate with other professionals (podiatrists, orthopedists, dermatologists, diabetes educators, and wound care experts) to ensure appropriate care.³

AARP Rhode Island supports H 7029 because it ensures the availability of important foot care to all older adults, and not just the individuals that can make it to the doctor's office. Home-based foot care supports prevention, early identification of concerns and the ability of older adults to age in place. We ask that you recommend passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/falls/data-research/facts-stats/index.html>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK560761/> Appeadu, Bordoni

³ <https://www.myamericannurse.com/nurses-and-preventive-foot-care/>



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Netto".

Matthew Netto
Associate State Director-AARP Rhode Island