



March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Donovan and Members, House Health and Human Services Committee

On behalf of SACRI, I am pleased to support **H7537**, a bill to require health insurers to cover scalp cooling devices sponsored by Representatives Alzate, Read, Dawson, Kazarian, Casimiro, Caldwell, Handy, Fogarty, Shallcross Smith, Ajello.

SACRI's mission is to mobilize people to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. It accomplishes this through *community organizing, public education, advocacy, and legislative action. When we consider quality of life, older adults consistently tell us that access to and affordability of healthcare is a top priority.*

Thousands of RIsers are diagnosed with cancer every year and chemotherapy is commonly used as a treatment mode for persons diagnosed with a number of types of cancers including breast, lung and colorectal cancers. Induced alopecia (hair loss) is one of the most distressing side effects of chemotherapy and may lead to depression and social isolation.

FDA approved scalp cooling devices work by vasoconstriction (narrowing the blood vessels to reduce the amount of chemo that reach hair follicles and reduced metabolism (which slows down cell division to protect the scalp from the drugs.)

While some major insurers have begun to recognize scalp cooling therapy as "medically necessary," many Rhode Islanders may be denied coverage. Out-of-pocket costs for scalp therapy treatment can be costly (\$1,000 to \$3,000) and be out of reach financially for many patients. Passing H7537 can remove the financial barrier to a treatment that preserves patient dignity and mental well-being during difficult periods of treatment and recovery.

I urge the committee to recommend H7537 for passage.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director