



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

Daniel J. McKee **Governor**
Kasim J. Yarn **Director**

March 12, 2026

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H7535 – AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- COMPASSIONATE ACCESS TO MEDICAL CANNABIS ACT

Dear Chair Donovan:

Please accept this letter as testimony from the Office of Veterans Services regarding **H7535, An Act Relating to Food and Drugs – The Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis Act.**

While we appreciate the intent of this legislation to provide compassionate care to terminally ill patients, the bill in its current form raises serious concerns for the Rhode Island Veterans Home (RIVH) in Bristol. H7535 would require certain healthcare facilities, including the RIVH, to permit the use of medical cannabis on-site. However, marijuana remains classified as a Schedule I Controlled Substance under federal law. Because the Veterans Home receives federal funding, allowing cannabis use within the facility could place the Home at risk of violating federal law and potentially jeopardize critical federal support.

Additionally, the bill does not clearly address how stored and locked cannabis would be distributed, or overseen within the facility, creating operational and liability concerns for the administration and staff responsible for the care of our Veterans.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to consider amending H7535 to address these legal and operational risks. Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership in supporting Rhode Island's Veterans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Yarn", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Kasim J. Yarn
Director of Veterans Services

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel for the Speaker of the House of Representatives
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy