



**March 12, 2026**

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

**Re: Support for H7943, H7944, H7945, H7946**

SACRI is pleased to support several bills before your Committee that will remove barriers for obtaining prompt and appropriate treatment for mental health conditions. They represent an important step toward achieving true mental health parity. I applaud rep. Tanzi and the bill's co-sponsors for introducing these bills.

**H7943** by Rep. Tanzi prohibits insurers from using prior authorization for in-network mental health and substance abuse disorders.

**H7944** by Rep. Tanzi requires payors to cover treatment of substance use disorders, at a minimum, to meet the criteria of the American Society of Addiction Medicine and for the treatment mental health and substance use disorder coverage and clinical criteria to not deviate for from generally accepted standards of care.

**H7945** by Rep. Tanzi provides that for treatment of mental health and substance use disorders, payors would rely upon criteria which reflect generally accepted standards of care when developing coverage.

**H7946** by Rep. Tanzi Requires health insurers to comply with federal mental health parity laws, prevent discriminatory treatment limits, and ensures meaningful mental health and substance use coverage in all benefit classifications.

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. In thinking about improving *quality of life*, promoting timely access to needed healthcare including both for physical or mental health conditions ranks as one of SACRI's top priorities.

Data from the 2025 RI Health Aging Report showed that 34% of the state's older adults had depression; an equal number had anxiety. It is critical that referrals to mental health providers for these and other conditions needing treatment by behavioral health providers not be delayed by administratively burdensome prior authorization requirements. The time involved in getting authorization can result in delayed care and even denial with patients abandoning care altogether. All Rhode Islanders deserve a healthcare system where behavioral health conditions are treated equitably with physical health conditions. We urge the Committee to favorably consider this legislation and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Carol Anne Costa, SACRI Executive Director