

March 19th, 2026

The Honorable Susan Donovan
Chair, House Health & Human Services Committee
State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: [Opposition to H7927, March 19th, 2026, House Health & Human Services Hearing](#)

Dear Chairwoman Donovan:

On behalf the Rhode Island Assisted Living Association (RIALA), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding House Bill 7927.

We appreciate the intent behind this legislation, which seeks to support resident autonomy, transparency, and safety through the use of electronic monitoring devices. Current law already appropriately allows residents to install monitoring technology at their own discretion and expense, including securing their own internet service.

However, we must respectfully oppose House Bill 7927 as currently drafted.

While well-intentioned, this proposal would shift a significant and unfunded operational burden onto providers by requiring facilities to supply internet access, at no cost, capable of supporting continuous audio and video streaming across multiple resident rooms.

The financial and operational implications of this mandate are substantial.

Long-term care and assisted living providers are already operating under significant financial pressure. According to national industry data, more than 50% of nursing homes are operating at a financial loss, driven largely by Medicaid reimbursement rates that fall below the actual cost of care. In Rhode Island and surrounding states, this gap continues to widen, placing increasing strain on providers' ability to absorb new, unfunded requirements.

To comply with this bill, facilities would likely need to:

- Upgrade broadband infrastructure and internal network capacity
- Install enterprise-grade wireless systems capable of handling simultaneous streaming
- Increase cybersecurity protections to safeguard sensitive resident data
- Provide ongoing IT maintenance, monitoring, and technical support

These are not minor adjustments, they represent significant capital investments and recurring operational costs that are not currently accounted for in reimbursement structures.

Additionally, requiring facilities to open internal networks to personal monitoring devices introduces heightened cybersecurity and privacy risks, particularly in healthcare environments where protected health information (PHI) is at stake. Facilities would bear responsibility for maintaining secure networks while accommodating third-party devices over which they have limited control.

Importantly, this proposal creates an inequitable and unsustainable funding expectation.

Residents currently have the right to install monitoring devices, and many already do so using private internet services. Shifting the cost burden from individuals to providers, without a corresponding funding mechanism, effectively creates an unfunded mandate on a system that is already financially constrained.

If the Committee chooses to advance this legislation, we respectfully recommend the following considerations:

- Establish a state-funded grant program to support necessary infrastructure upgrades
- Ensure Medicaid rate adjustments or direct reimbursement mechanisms to cover both capital and ongoing operational costs
- Provide clear guidance and protections around cybersecurity and liability, including limitations on provider responsibility for third-party devices
- Allow for reasonable implementation timelines to ensure compliance without disruption to resident care

In closing, we share the goal of supporting resident dignity, choice, and safety. However, policies intended to enhance quality of life must also be financially and operationally sustainable for the providers entrusted with delivering care.

Without appropriate funding and safeguards, House Bill 7927 risks placing additional strain on an already fragile long-term care system.

We respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider this proposal in its current form and to work collaboratively with providers to develop a more balanced and sustainable approach.

Thank you for your time and consideration.