



Michael Sroczynski  
President

March 19, 2026

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

Re: H.7932

Dear Chairperson Donovan,

On behalf of the Hospital Association of Rhode Island and our member hospitals, I write to express concerns with H.7932, an act relating to American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter services.

Hospitals share the goal of ensuring meaningful communication access for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. This is a legal obligation and a core component of safe, high-quality care.

As drafted, however, this proposal may unintentionally limit timely access to communication services. Requiring prior approval from the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH) before any reduction in ASL interpreter services could be interpreted to apply broadly to changes in how services are delivered—not just reductions in access. Hospitals must be able to respond in real time to patient needs and interpreter availability.

In practice, hospitals often rely on virtual ASL interpretation due to the limited availability of on-site interpreters, particularly in emergent or off-hours situations. These services are clinically appropriate and frequently the most effective way to ensure timely communication. The proposed approval requirement could restrict this flexibility and limit the adoption of evolving technologies, including virtual and emerging AI-supported solutions.

The bill also introduces additional administrative burden and compliance risk, including potential licensure penalties, for routine operational decisions.

Hospitals remain committed to equitable communication access. That goal is best achieved through a framework that preserves access while allowing providers the flexibility to adapt to real-world conditions.

Thank you for your consideration. We welcome the opportunity to work with Representative Handy and this committee on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Tomasso", written over a horizontal line.

Lisa P. Tomasso  
Senior Vice President