



March 23, 2026

The Honorable Representative Susan Donovan
Chairwoman of the House Health and Human Services Committee
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bill 7346 - Medicaid Rate Floor

Dear Chairwoman Donovan and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Mental Health Association of Rhode Island, I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of House Bill 7346. We thank Representative Hull for introducing this legislation.

This legislation takes an important and practical step toward strengthening Rhode Island's behavioral health system by requiring commercial insurance companies to reimburse providers at rates no lower than Medicaid.

Across our state, mental health providers are struggling to keep their doors open. Reimbursement rates from commercial insurers often fall short of the actual cost of delivering care, creating unsustainable conditions for clinicians and community-based providers. As a result, many providers limit the number of insured patients they can see—or leave insurance networks altogether—further shrinking an already strained workforce.

House Bill 7346 helps address this challenge by establishing a reasonable reimbursement floor. By aligning commercial rates with Medicaid, this bill supports provider sustainability and helps ensure that mental health professionals can continue serving Rhode Islanders in need.

This legislation is also critically important for consumers. Rhode Islanders seeking mental health care are too often met with long waitlists, limited provider availability, and delays in accessing services. These barriers can lead to worsening conditions, increased use of emergency services, and higher long-term costs for the healthcare system.

Timely access to mental health care improves outcomes. When individuals can connect with care early, they are more likely to stabilize, remain engaged in their communities,



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and avoid more intensive—and more expensive—interventions later on. In this way, this legislation is not only a workforce solution, but also a cost-effective strategy that benefits patients, providers, and insurers alike.

At its core, this bill is about fairness, access, and sustainability. It recognizes that mental health care is essential health care—and that reimbursement structures must reflect that reality.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Laurie-Marie Pisciotta'.

Laurie-Marie Pisciotta
Executive Director
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