

House Health and Human Services Committee
DATE 3/24/26

Bill# H8135

Re: Testimony in Support of H 28-18-96 – Equal Pay for Health Care Providers

Dear Chairperson and Honorable Representatives Casimiro, Donovan, Spears, Potter, Alzate, Shallcross Smith, and Hopkins:

My name is Diane McKeeff, APRN, and I am a nurse practitioner from Narragansett, Rhode Island. I currently practice with South County Medical Group. I am writing in strong support of H 28-18-96, titled “Equal Pay for Health Care Providers.”

As an advanced practice registered nurse, I have witnessed firsthand the inequities in reimbursement that exist between providers delivering the same care. Despite providing high-quality, evidence-based care to patients across the lifespan, nurse practitioners are consistently reimbursed at lower rates than physicians for identical services. This disparity is not only unjust, but it also undermines the sustainability of independent and community-based practices.

In my own experience, I was forced to close my private nurse practitioner practice due to the inability to sustain operations under reduced reimbursement rates. Despite maintaining a full patient panel and delivering comprehensive, patient-centered care, the financial model simply did not support continued operation. This is not an isolated case. Many highly skilled nurse practitioners face similar challenges. This limits patient access to care, particularly in underserved and rural communities.

Equal pay for equal work is essential to maintaining a strong and accessible healthcare system. When nurse practitioners are reimbursed fairly, it supports practice sustainability, encourages workforce retention, and expands access to care for patients who rely on these services.

I urge you to vote in favor of H 28-18-96 to ensure fairness in reimbursement and to protect access to high-quality healthcare for Rhode Island residents.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to provide testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Diane McKeeff, APRN
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