



Rhode Island Academy of
**PHYSICIAN
ASSISTANTS**

Date. March 24,2026

From: Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants

Re H – 8135
Position Support

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The Honorable Susan are Donovan
Chair,
House committee on health and human services.
82 Smith St.
Providence, R.I. 02903

Dear Chair Donovan and Members of the Committee,

As the professional organization representing over 800 Rhode Island licensed physician assistants (PAs) the Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants (RIAPA) would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill H-8135

We are writing to express our strong support for House Bill 8135.,

This bill, would require state and private insurers to reimburse nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants (PAs) at the same rate as physicians for the same services in the same geographic area.

Why H8135 Matters

1. Equal reimbursement strengthens Rhode Island’s healthcare workforce

NPs and PAs are essential to maintaining access to timely care—especially in primary care, behavioral health, and underserved communities. Paying them equitably for the same work ensures Rhode Island can recruit and retain these clinicians rather than losing them to neighboring states with more competitive reimbursement structures.

2. Patients benefit from shorter wait times and expanded access

Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants
405 Promenade St., Suite A
Providence, R.I. 02908

info@RIAPA.org

WWW.RIAPA.org

Equal reimbursement supports care models that rely on team-based practice. When NPs and PAs are reimbursed fairly, practices can sustainably expand hours, reduce appointment backlogs, and improve continuity of care. This is especially important as Rhode Island continues to face provider shortages across multiple specialties.

3. The bill aligns payment with actual value

NPs and PAs provide high-quality evidence based care. When they perform the same service, to the same standard, for the same patient population, reimbursement should reflect that parity. H8135 corrects a longstanding misalignment between clinical practice and insurer payment policy.

4. Fair reimbursement supports financially stable, Community based practices.

Independent and small group—particularly those serving Medicaid and commercially insured patients—operate on thin margins. Equal reimbursement helps stabilize these practices, allowing them to invest in staffing, technology, and patient services that improve outcomes and reduce long-term system costs.

Professional Perspective

As PAs, we see firsthand how delays in care, limited appointment availability, and provider shortages directly affect patient outcomes. NPs and PAs are often the clinicians who step in to fill these gaps. When insurers undervalue our collective work, it creates bottlenecks that ripple across the entire healthcare system.

H8135 supports a more efficient, patient centered system by ensuring all qualified clinicians are compensated fairly for the services they provide.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to **support and advance House Bill 8135**. This legislation is a practical, evidence based -aligned step toward strengthening Rhode Island's healthcare workforce and improving access for patients across the state. Respectfully.

Jim Carney

Rhode Island Academy of physician assistance.
Director of advocacy and government relations