



RI Department of Health
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Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 771
www.health.ri.gov

March 30, 2026

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

RE: H 7540 - An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Department of Health

Dear Chair Donovan:

Please accept this letter of support with amendments for H 7540, legislation that would require that routine childhood and adult immunization vaccine recommendations be based on, and developed from, evidence-based, medically sound scientific research by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, and other such similar medical professional organizations.

Specifically, RIDOH proposes to replace Section 1, 231-44 (a) – (c) in H 7625 in its entirety with the following amendment:

23-1-44. Routine childhood and adult immunization vaccines.

(a) The department of health shall include in the department's immunization program those vaccines for routine childhood immunization as recommended by the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) or as determined by the director of the department of health to be necessary to protect the public health, and for routine adult immunization as recommended by the ACIP, or as determined by the director of the department of health to be necessary to protect the public health ~~to the extent permitted by available funds~~. The immunization program includes administrative and quality assurance services and the Rhode Island Child and Adult Immunization Registry (RICAIR), a confidential, computerized information system that is used to manage statewide immunizations, for all persons in Rhode Island.

(b) The director of the department of health shall appoint an advisory committee that will be convened ~~after the ACIP makes a recommendation regarding immunization~~ at the discretion of the director. The committee will review the ACIP recommendations ~~for the state~~ and director- initiated proposals for the state; assess the vaccine cost and feasibility; and advise the director of health and the office of the health insurance commissioner regarding insurers and providers acting on the ~~ACIP immunization recommendation~~ immunization recommendations or proposals. All recommendations will be posted on the department of health website. The advisory committee membership shall include, but not be limited to, a primary care provider, an epidemiologist, a pharmacist, major insurers, and at the discretion of the director, representatives of the nursing home industry, and the home healthcare industry ~~and major insurers~~.

(c) For the purpose of protecting patients' information, all personally-identifiable information obtained pursuant to this section shall be subject to the privacy protections of chapter 37.3 of title and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191 (HIPAA), as amended.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation which will protect the public's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy