



**TOWN OF COVENTRY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**50 Wood Street Coventry, RI 02816**

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March 30, 2026

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

Re: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of H-7627

Chair Donovan:

We write in support of H-7627, an act which would give eligible families the opportunity to extend Early Intervention (EI) services until the September after a child's third birthday, to reduce gaps in services and promote smooth transitions into school-based special education services. Under current law, Rhode Island's EI program ends on a child's third birthday, at which point school districts become responsible for providing special education services to eligible children. This is challenging because schools typically work on school year calendars, and school-based services are not always available immediately when a child turns three, especially if the child has a spring or summer birthday. We often see gaps in services for children transitioning from EI to school-based special education, and these gaps could be avoided if families had the option to extend EI until the start of the next school year.


The Town of Coventry Department of Human Services supports many families in our area that can benefit from this extension as it will bridge gaps in present service structure. We provide basic human needs and supportive services to Coventry families on a daily basis and see this as a great opportunity to address this unmet need.

We also appreciate that S-7627 takes a slow and incremental approach to avoid overloading a fragile provider system too quickly. The proposal includes a nearly two-year planning period, during which the implementation team will meet. This gives the State, providers, school districts, and families

the time to develop the capacity and new systems necessary to support this new population of EI recipients after their third birthdays.

Thank you very much for your careful consideration of this bill and our testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robillard", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Robert N. Robillard Jr., LMHC  
Director