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Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2026 5:15 PM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: Written Testimony in Support of Rhode Island House Bill H7940

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Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Pita, and I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill H7940.

I am a Rhode Island resident who has personally experienced infertility, IVF, and surrogacy. I submit this testimony to share my experience and to highlight why this legislation is so important for individuals and families like mine.

My journey to try to become a parent has included five cycles of IVF, four embryo transfers, and three miscarriages. I have been diagnosed with endometriosis and adenomyosis, conditions that made it incredibly difficult to carry a pregnancy. Eventually, I underwent a medically necessary hysterectomy, which ended my ability to carry a child myself.

That is how I arrived at pursuing surrogacy—not by choice, but because it is the only remaining path for me to have a family.

Infertility is not just a medical diagnosis; it is an experience that affects every aspect of a person's life—emotionally, physically, and financially. It involves ongoing medical treatments, uncertainty, and loss. IVF and surrogacy are not elective or optional—they are medically necessary pathways to parenthood for many individuals.

Despite Rhode Island's progress in mandating infertility coverage, there are still significant gaps. Insurance coverage remains inconsistent, and many individuals are excluded based on narrow or outdated definitions of infertility. Treatments such as IVF may be partially covered, but surrogacy is often excluded entirely, even when it is medically necessary.

House Bill H7940 is critical because it strengthens protections against unfair discrimination in insurance coverage. Without these protections, individuals facing infertility may be denied care, excluded from coverage, or treated differently based on how they build their families.

The financial burden of fertility care is substantial. IVF and surrogacy can cost tens of thousands of dollars, placing these options out of reach for many. Expanding protections and ensuring fair access to coverage is not only a matter of policy—it is a matter of equity and access to parenthood.

While Rhode Island has made meaningful strides, current policies do not fully reflect the realities of modern family-building. Many individuals, including those who require surrogacy, continue to face barriers that prevent them from accessing medically necessary care.

For individuals like me, surrogacy is not a choice made lightly. It is the result of exhausting all other options and experiencing significant medical challenges and loss. Yet, it remains one of the least supported aspects of fertility care.

House Bill H7940 represents an important step toward fairness, dignity, and inclusion. It acknowledges that all individuals deserve equal access to the care they need to build a family, regardless of their medical circumstances.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support H7940 so that individuals and families across Rhode Island have a more equitable and compassionate path to parenthood.

Thank you for your time and consideration.