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Chairman DiPalma and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Dayna Gladstein, and I am the President and CEO of Newport Mental Health. I am writing to you in support of tonight's hearing regarding HB7127, specifically highlighting the discussions on the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals: FY2026 Supplemental and FY2027 Budgets regarding Article 10, Sections 1 and 2.

I want to thank the committee and the General Assembly for its continued efforts in supporting this crucial program. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is a key part of the continuum of behavioral health care established here in Rhode Island. Together, the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs), and Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) form a comprehensive infrastructure that ensures children, adults and their families can access immediate de-escalation, stabilization, and seamless connections to ongoing treatment. These pathways are interdependent. 988 provides a crucial entry point for those in acute need, MRSS delivers rapid, on-site support to individuals and families, and CCBHCs are the 24/7/365 behavioral health backbone for immediate and continuous community-based response, care coordination and treatment of behavioral health concerns for all levels of community-based care. To truly maximize their impact, it is essential that the connections among these three service pathways are strengthened through sustainable funding and resources, ensuring no individual falls through the cracks when seeking help.

A critical aspect in support of this legislation is the funding of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, because a program as essential as this one should not be subject to political changes. The state has already made considerable progress in building the system components needed to support behavioral health, but ensuring the long-term sustainability of 988, regardless of future changes in leadership, is critical. The mental well-being of Rhode Islanders is paramount to the work we do as a CCBHC here at Newport Mental Health. And we thank you again for walking hand in hand with us to protect your constituents and our communities.

Additionally, we urge committee members to support the following legislation regarding the 988 line, including:

**Senate Bill 3058**, which establishes the operations necessary for a 988 hotline for suicide prevention/behavioral health crisis management and establishes the operations necessary for acute mental health crisis outreach/stabilization services in direct response to the 988 hotline.

**House Bill 8177**, which establishes a fund and the operations necessary for a hotline for suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis management. Also instates a monthly surcharge on telephone lines to fund the 988 call center.

**And House Bill 7026 / Senate Bill 2348**, the Nathan Bruno, and Jason Flatt Act, which would direct schools that issue student ID cards to include numbers for suicide prevention and substance use disorder prevention.



## Newport Mental Health

I urge the committee to support tonight's recommendations regarding **Article 10, sections 1 and 2 of the BHDDH FY2026 Supplemental and FY2027 Budgets.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna Gladstein,  
LICSW President, and CEO



**Newport Mental Health**