

RHODE ISLAND
RIAF
ABORTION FUND

April 8, 2026

Dear Chair DiPalma and members of the Senate Committee on Finance:

My name is Kelley Russell, and I am the Board President of the Rhode Island Abortion Fund (RIAF).

I am testifying on behalf of RIAF in strong support of the proposed one-time budget allocation of \$600,000 for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE) contained in Article 1, Section 1 for EOHHS of the proposed FY 2027 budget (H 7127). This funding will cover the cost of preventive care such as cancer screenings, STI testing and treatment, birth control, and other essential health care for patients who are now blocked from using their Medicaid insurance at PPSNE due to the “defund” provision in the federal H.R.1 law passed in July 2025. PPSNE is a safety net provider serving nearly 10,000 patients last year in Rhode Island. Patients are counting on the state to step in and backfill the blocked federal funding so PPSNE can continue to serve patients who need care now and in the future.

Planned Parenthood plays an essential role in the reproductive healthcare landscape. One in three women has been to a Planned Parenthood health center for comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare, including access to contraception, STI testing and treatment, abortion care, primary care, and more. Planned Parenthood exists to provide accessible and equitable coverage to all communities, and the “defund” law threatens the provision of these critical services. RIAF is proud to partner with PPSNE to ensure that Rhode Islanders can access the reproductive healthcare that they need and deserve.

Access to reproductive health care remains vulnerable here in Rhode Island. RIAF supports the budget allocation in H 7127 because all Rhode Islanders should have the right to visit their trusted provider for the health care they need. We urge the committee to support the proposed \$600,000 to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England in the FY 2027 budget to ensure the necessary state funding for preventive health services and to protect patients’ access to care.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kelley Russell
Board Member, President
Rhode Island Abortion Fund