



**Testimony Re: House Bill 7127, Article 11, Section 14: *Rhode Island Marketplace Affordability Program Act of 2026***

**Senate Finance Committee**

**April 9, 2026**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to voice its support for Article 11, Section 14 of Governor Mckee's proposed FY2027 budget. This bill would improve Rhode Island families' access to affordable health insurance through the state-based HealthSourceRI marketplace.

Over 40,000 Rhode Islanders have insurance coverage through HSRI - Rhode Island's health insurance marketplace. This exchange serves as a backstop and is available to anyone who cannot get coverage elsewhere. These individuals do not qualify for or are not eligible for Medicaid or Medicare and cannot access employer-based coverage. [In 2024, 2,250 children had coverage through the health insurance exchange, and these families will have seen the cost of their health insurance coverage increase dramatically in 2026.](#) The *Rhode Island Marketplace Affordability Program Act of 2026* would create a state affordability program targeting enrollees with incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, which is an important step toward supporting the lowest-income Rhode Islanders who purchase coverage through HSRI. **However, we think additional support is needed, so we strongly recommend that the General Assembly consider fully replacing the expired federal tax credits, as proposed in [House Bill 7466](#), sponsored by Representative Speakman.**

When the federal Enhanced Premium Tax Credits expired in 2025, Rhode Islanders who purchased coverage through HealthSourceRI saw monthly premiums double, on average. Sudden, significant increases in health insurance costs, particularly at a time where other costs are increasing as well, leads to more Rhode Islanders going without insurance, enrolling in a less comprehensive plan, or skipping necessary health services. **We expect that over 50,000 Rhode Islanders will lose their health insurance coverage between 2026 and 2027 due to federal cuts to Medicaid and the loss of federal tax credits, doubling Rhode Island's uninsured population. Fully restoring the Enhanced Premium Tax Credit would help nearly 21,000 HSRI enrollees maintain their coverage, including children and families.**

We also recommend extending this support to other populations, including populations who have lost eligibility for tax credits, such as lawfully present immigrants and individuals who are unable to comply with Medicaid work reporting requirements.

A dramatic increase in our uninsured population will increase the cost of health insurance coverage for all Rhode Islanders because individuals who lose coverage will still need health care. This will increase the amount of uncompensated care that will be required to support the health of these Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for the leadership that the General Assembly has shown on making sure all Rhode Islanders have access to health insurance coverage. We support this proposal and recommend consideration of the modifications described above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.