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The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma
Rhode Island State Senate
Senate Finance Committee
(Submitted electronically via SenateFinance@rilegislature.gov)

Dear Chairman DiPalma and Members of the Committee:

Please accept the Rhode Island Health Center Association's letter of **support** for **Senate Bill 2241**, which would make services provided by graduate student interns who work under a supervisory protocol eligible to be paid from Medicaid reimbursement.

Rhode Island's eight community health centers provide medical, behavioral, and dental care for over 220,000 individuals, regardless of their ability to pay. Providing over 138,000 behavioral health patient visits, health centers' mental health professionals play a vital role in ensuring access to care. They also serve as vital clinical training sites, helping to develop a sustainable pipeline of future behavioral health providers.

Currently, clinical training sites often lack the resources to support behavioral health professional graduate student interns, limiting the pipeline of qualified providers. Investing in training opportunities would not only address this bottleneck but also help retain emerging behavioral health professionals, strengthening the state's long-term workforce capacity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

M Campbell

Melissa Campbell
Policy Manager

Rhode Island Health Center Association members include:
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc. ~ Comprehensive Community Action Program
East Bay Community Action Program ~ Providence Community Health Centers
Thundermist Health Center ~ Tri-County Community Action Agency
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care ~ Wood River Health