

Rhode Island Chapter

INCORPORATED IN RHODE ISLAND

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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Dear Chairman Louis Dipalma,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 2542 and respectfully urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation.

SB2542 addresses a critical issue facing Rhode Island families: access to pediatric health care. By increasing Medicaid payment rates for outpatient pediatric services to 130% of Medicare rates, this bill takes a meaningful step toward ensuring that children across our state can receive timely, high-quality medical care.

Currently, Medicaid rates for pediatric providers in Rhode Island lag significantly behind neighboring states, contributing to difficulties in recruiting and retaining pediatric specialists. As a result, families—especially those relying on Medicaid—face growing challenges in accessing care. This is particularly concerning given that more than half of Rhode Island’s children depend on Medicaid coverage for their health care needs.

SB2542 directly addresses these challenges by strengthening the financial sustainability of pediatric practices and helping to expand the provider workforce. Increasing payment rates will allow practices to recruit and retain pediatricians, specialists, and behavioral health providers, ensuring that children receive the care they need without unnecessary delays or barriers.

Investing in children’s health care is not only a moral responsibility but also a fiscally sound decision. Research consistently shows that early access to quality health care improves long-term health outcomes and reduces future costs. By supporting this bill, Rhode Island is making a smart investment in the health and well-being of future generations.

I appreciate your service and your thoughtful consideration of this issue. I respectfully urge you to support SB2542 and help ensure that all Rhode Island children have access to the care they deserve.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Peter Pogacar MD FAAP
Immediate Past President of RIAAP

