



May 5, 2026

Senator Louis P. DiPalma, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
RI General Assembly  
RI State House  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: **Testimony in SUPPORT of S 2831, PRIMARY CARE TRAINING SITES PROGRAM**

Dear Chair Donovan,

I, Denise Coppa, from Senate District 35 and Legislative Liaison, of the Nurse Practitioner Alliance of Rhode Island, **Director of the Family Nurse Practitioner Program at the University of RI** and a practicing nurse practitioner am writing in **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2831**. To clarify, Certified Nurse Practitioners (CNP) are Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) who have successfully completed advanced education at the masters and/ or doctoral level and have taken professional certification or “board” exams that allow them to be licensed by the state of RI, with full practice authority. This includes the ability to diagnose, treat, and prescribe medications and to be the provider of record for citizens in Rhode Island, across the life span. The primary care training sites program has been in place for 2 years now.

The original bill was so important that it was entered into the Governors 2025 budget. This line item in the budget provided \$2.2 million to support the establishment of the office of primary health care training. As a result of the funding distributed among 34 primary health care practices in the state, increased the number of clinical training sites by 68%. A projected number of 594 nurse practitioner, physician assistant and medical students have received supervised clinical training. In addition, the funding enabled Brown and URI educators to create an online learning training platform for students and preceptors, along with quarterly, remote training sessions. The practices where these students are placed collectively serve 300,000 Rhode Island patients.

By integrating financial incentives with a structured curriculum and peer-learning collaboratives the PCTSP strengthens “homegrown” training pathways and increases the likelihood that Rhode Island-trained clinicians will remain in Rhode Island to practice primary care. The PCTSP has positioned Rhode Island as a national model for primary care workforce development. As one of the few programs in the nation to provide direct financial incentives to community-based preceptors, PCTSP’s innovative approach has earned national recognition—including attention at the October 2025 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASSEM) workshop on *Addressing Training Site and Slot Shortages Across the Health Professions*, where Rhode Island’s model drew strong interest from other states.

As a nurse practitioner faculty member and practicing nurse practitioner, representing the NP Alliance, strongly urge passage and funding for S 2831.

Sincerely,

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