



5/5/2026

Chairman DiPalma
Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: EI Extension: Bridge to Preschool bill S2834

Dear Chairman and members of the committee,

I want to thank you for the opportunity to support Senator Valverde's EI Extension: Bridge to Preschool bill S2834 bill.

My name is Marie Palumbo-Hayes, LICSW and I am the Chief of Community Health at Family Service of Rhode Island (FSRI), a health and human service organization with the mission “to advance opportunity and hope in our communities.” In my role, I oversee a variety of programs, which includes one of Rhode Island’s Early Intervention Programs.

Early Intervention provides critical services for infants and young children with developmental delays. Services are provided families homes where they receive individualized care coordination, educational support, specialized nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language services. These ongoing interventions are all vital to the healthy development of the most vulnerable infants and young children.

Currently children are discharged from Early Intervention services by their third birthday. It is critical that children and their families enrolled in Early Intervention services do not lose the skills they have learned while waiting for transition into the public-school system. I am asking you to pass S2834, which will enable children who are currently receiving Early Intervention services and turn 3 years old between May 1st to August 31st to continue with their trusted providers until they begin school in September with their peers. Additionally, the bill includes an Implementation Advisory Board to support families and providers in creating a system that works for all.

I urge you to pass Senator Valverde’s S2834 bill. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and please feel free to contact me with any questions or follow-up.

Sincerely,

Marie Palumbo-Hayes, LICSW

Marie Palumbo-Hayes, LICSW
Chief of Behavioral Health