



**April 6, 2026**

**Senate Committee on Finance**

**Rhode Island State House Providence, RI 02903**

**RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill No. 2834– Early Intervention Continuity Act**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of this act, which would allow children with diagnosed developmental disabilities, whose third birthday falls between May 1 and August 31, to continue receiving early intervention services through September 1. This legislation also ensures that the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) develops a plan to prevent gaps in care during the transition to early childhood special education, and requires private insurers to cover this extended support.

Early intervention is one of the most critical investments we can make in a child’s development. For families already navigating complex needs, even a short disruption in services can lead to setbacks in communication, learning, and emotional growth. This bill recognizes that transitions—especially around a child’s third birthday—must be handled with care, coordination, and consistency.

Too often, families experience a gap between early intervention services and preschool special education. These gaps can create stress for parents and caregivers and can undo the progress a child has worked so hard to

achieve. By extending services through September 1, this act creates a more natural and supportive transition aligned with the school calendar.

Requiring EOHHS to develop a clear continuity plan is also a critical step. Families should not have to navigate these systems alone. A coordinated approach ensures that children do not fall through the cracks and that providers are aligned in supporting each child's success.

Additionally, requiring private insurers to cover this extension promotes equity. Access to uninterrupted care should not depend on a family's financial situation. Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive with consistent, high-quality support.

This legislation is about fairness, stability, and giving children the strongest possible start. I respectfully urge the committee to support this act and ensure that no child experiences a preventable gap in critical early services.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Diana Garlington  
Policy Program Officer  
United Way of Rhode Island