



May 5, 2026

Chair DiPalma
Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House

Re: Support of the Family Home Visiting bill S2845

Dear Chairman and members of the Committee,

My name is Fiona Nicholson, and I am the Program Director for the Healthy Families America (HFA) program at Family Service of Rhode Island. I write today in support of Senator Valverde's bill S2845 to request that Rhode Island adequately funds the state's crucial home visiting programs.

HFA is an evidence-based, long term home visiting program that is designed to support families who have experienced trauma, are facing challenges or stressors, or other adverse experiences in their lives. HFA serves prenatal women and families with infants up to the age of 5 years old. HFA is the signature program of Prevent Child Abuse America and is designed to provide support to our vulnerable families. In 2025 FSRI HFA program served 198 families with 3,440 visits ;95 % were low-income families.

HFA offers support to new parents navigating the joys and struggles of parenthood. HFA provides services for prenatal moms, supports bonding and attachment with newborns, offers child development information and activities, and makes referrals to community resources. It also promotes safe sleep for infants to reduce risk of SIDS. HFA's approach is strength-based, culturally respectful and family-centered. HFA parents are more confident in their parenting role.

We thank you for securing \$409,765 to draw down \$1,229,295. **For FFY27, Rhode Island should make the \$787,000 investment to receive \$2.36 million in federal funds to fund these vital programs.** This investment is not included in the Governor's proposed FY27 budget. We urge you pass **S2845** to ensure we can meet the federal match. We also support the increased reporting requirements to help ensure the sustainability of the home visiting programs.

Thank you,

Fiona Nicholson
Program Director
Family Service of Rhode Island