



04/03/2026

The Honorable Senator Melissa A. Murray

Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

82 Smith Street

Providence, RI 02903

RE: Support for S2109 – Benefit Determination and Utilization Review Act

Dear Chair Murray and Honorable Members of the Committee:

We are writing in strong support for S2109, which would prohibit prior authorization and certain utilization review barriers for medications used to treat opioid and alcohol use disorders. We at Rhode Island Communities for Addiction Recovery Efforts (RICARES) work to eliminate the impact of addiction stigma and discrimination and reduce the health disparities and social injustices that undermine recovery. Medications used to treat substance use disorders are evidence-based best practice. These lifesaving medications stabilize brain chemistry, lower the risk of overdose and death, and help create conditions in which people can begin to rebuild their lives.

Delays in accessing these medications will put many Rhode Islanders' health and early recovery at risk. Treatment delayed is often treatment denied, especially in the context of substance use disorders when readiness for care can be fleeting. Acting at the exact moment care is being sought can be lifesaving. Prior authorization and delays can mean returning to drug use, loss of motivation for treatment, overdose, and death. Requiring prior authorization interferes with clinical decision-making and undermines providers' ability to deliver evidence-based treatment to patients. S2109 ensures that medical decisions are made by providers and patients; not delayed by administrative processes that are misaligned with evidence-based care.

Rhode Island is in the midst of an overdose crisis. Recovery depends on consistency. Interruptions in care erode recovery capital like housing, employment, and relationships – that our policies should be strengthening to protect and empower our communities.

We respectfully urge you to support S2109. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely/


Lindsay Garcia

Executive Director



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