

Senators Pamela Lauria and Melissa Murray
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
State of RI General Assembly
82 Smith St., Providence, RI 02903

March 9, 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2118 titled PRIMARY CARE TRAINING SITES PROGRAM

Dear Senators:

I am Paula Slinko, and I live in Providence, Rhode Island.

I support Bill 2118 because it strengthens primary care education and supports patient-centered care using training designed to “meet the state’s evolving health needs and advancing population health goals” (DOH, 2026).

I am a fellow Family Nurse Practitioner student at the University of Rhode Island and a member of the Nurse Practitioner Alliance of Rhode Island. I am currently completing my 750 clinical practicum hours. My current primary care site received grant funding for the 2025 academic year. Didactic training has introduced me to the concept of Patient-Centered Medical Homes. This training has been extremely useful in preparing me for clinicals, and I have applied it in practice. With this bill, not only are students benefiting from the program, but so are the preceptors.

This allows preceptors to have the support they need to provide their students with the best possible experience for success despite the shortage in the healthcare workforce.

As the Rhode Island Department of Health puts it, the program created high-quality training opportunities to strengthen the primary care workforce. The Department of Health also noted \$2M in grant funding was awarded to 34 primary care practices in the program’s first year. This is highly notable and provides students with extensive exposure to diverse settings.

As a Nurse Practitioner student, I depend on these experiences to shape me into a knowledgeable, skilled professional.

I urge you to vote in favor of Bill 2118.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak in favor of Bill 2118. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Paula Slinko, BSN, RN
Providence, RI, 02908
Senate District 4