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February 26, 2026

The Honorable Melissa A. Murray, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
State House  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: S 2379 – An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Department of Health**

Dear Chair Murray:

Please accept this letter of support for S 2379, legislation that would, commencing January 1, 2027, mandate that healthcare insurers provide health insurance coverage without cost-share requirements for vaccinations recommended by the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and would mandate the coverage for the medical assistance program and managed care organizations.

S 2379, which was introduced at the request of RIDOH, authorizes the Director of RIDOH to determine the necessary immunization schedule to protect Rhode Islander's health. The proposed legislation would authorize the Director of RIDOH, at his discretion, to convene the State-appointed advisory committee. The committee will review proposals initiated by the Director of RIDOH for the State, in addition to national Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations.

The proposed legislation will ensure that Rhode Islanders have continued access to critically important, life-saving immunizations as the federal government continues to take steps that narrow access to them. The enactment of S 2379 will ensure that Rhode Island has maximum authority and flexibility to set State immunization policy based on a review of scientific data and evidence-based recommendations. The proposed legislation will also ensure that all individuals and families have access to vaccines by eliminating financial burdens for individuals and families that result from cost-sharing measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation which will protect the public's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin".

Jerome M. Larkin, MD  
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
The Honorable Linda L. Ujifusa  
Kristen Silvia, Director of Legislation and Deputy Chief of Staff  
Patricia Resende, Director of Senate Policy