



May 5, 2026

The Honorable Melissa A. Murray, Chairwoman
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: S.2381, S.2383, S.2460, S.2561

Dear Chairwoman Murray,

The undersigned members of the Rhode Island Business Coalition are writing to express our concerns regarding the above-referenced bills that would place restrictions on insurer cost containment initiatives and mandate additional health benefits to be covered under all fully insured health benefit plans.

For the past several years, the Coalition has expressed concerns on bills such as these because they have the potential to add costs to fully-insured health insurance plans offered to mostly small and mid-sized employers. As representatives of businesses across our state, we are concerned as these costs are disproportionately borne by the small business community, their employees as well as Rhode Islanders who purchase coverage through the individual market. Often these are the health insurance purchasers least able to afford the premium increases.

For 2026 the OHIC approved the following increases in premiums for health insurance:

- 21% for the individual market
- 17.6% for the small group market
- 19.3% for the large group market

Over 170,000 Rhode Islanders will be impacted by these rate changes.

Affordability is a significant concern for Rhode Island small employers. An analysis of National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) data by the Rhode Island Business Group on Health, showed the Rhode Island small employer market has seen a 53 percent drop in covered lives from 2012 to 2022. A recent analysis of the Rhode Island health insurance market by Oliver Wyman conducted for the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC) showed significant decreases in membership in both the large and small group fully insured markets since 2020.

The Rhode Island Business Coalition represents 50 industries and 6,280 businesses that employ 231,200 people throughout Rhode Island.

This session, there are numerous bills that would add new health insurance benefit mandates, increase commercial reimbursement rates, and change the administrative processes of health insurers and providers. We believe these issues should be reviewed by the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner. The legislature has tasked OHIC with studying methods to improve the administration of the state's health care system to drive affordability.

The affordability of health insurance is a significant concern for Rhode Island employers. We ask that the General Assembly take additional time to ensure a robust analysis of these bills to ensure they improve the healthcare system and address rising costs.

Sincerely,

David Chenevert, Chairman, Rhode Island Business Coalition
Associated Builders and Contractors – Rhode Island Chapter
East Greenwich Chamber of Commerce
Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce
National Federation of Independent Business
Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce
Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit Regulations Subcommittee
Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit Tax and Budget Committee
Rhode Island Staffing Association

cc. Senate Health and Human Services Committee members