

March 31, 2026

Support for Senate Bill 2562 to fund the Pedi PRN program and to put both the Moms PRN and Pedi PRN program in state law

Dear Senator Murray and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Gerald Tarnoff, a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, treating Rhode Island patients, mostly children, in various settings since 1990. I am writing to support the passage of senate bill 2562 to sustain the RI Moms Psychiatric Resource Network and the Pediatric Psychiatry Resource Network. The Pedi PRN program provides an extremely valuable, even critical service for RI patients. This program helps pediatricians or PCPs provide psychiatric care that is so often otherwise unavailable. Treatment with someone's own pediatrician or PCP can also be efficient, likely cost saving in the long run and importantly, often more comfortable for patients. This type of program with consultative psychiatric expertise can enable children with early or moderately severe symptoms to receive preventative care earlier, before more serious issues emerge, and allow psychiatrists to be more available for those children and adolescents with more serious psychiatric disorders. Especially during this time of the continuing crises in children's mental health, along with a shortage of psychiatrists and other health professionals working with children, this type of program needs to continue. My understanding is that if funds are not allocated, the Pedi PRN program would close in September, an outcome that I believe would be a major setback for the state of Rhode Island's psychiatric availability and a tragedy for those children unable to receive the care they need and deserve.

As a psychiatrist, I have also used the Mom's PRN program more than once and received some invaluable guidance which helped to coordinate the combination of psychiatric and post-partum care a patient of mine needed.

I therefore am aware of the benefit of these programs from both the psychiatric point of view and from the point of view of a physician whose patient has been helped by this type of program. Please don't let these programs disappear and support their continuation.

I also want to thank Senator DiMario and the other sponsors for submitting this important bill and the Health and Human Services Committee for your consideration.

If you have any questions I can be reached at the above e-mail address or by phone.

Sincerely,

Gerald Tarnoff, MD

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