

Accessibility & Inclusion Consulting, LLC
Annette Bourbonniere
33A DeBlois St., Newport, RI 02840
Phone: 401-207-9840



Testimony Re: **26 Senate 2567** – An Act Relating to Insurance – Universal and Unified Healthcare System Act

Position: **For**

My name is Annette Bourbonniere, and I live in Newport, RI.

I have lived in Rhode Island my entire life, and I previously worked in the healthcare system for more than 20 years. I live with disability, and I advocate for disability rights and inclusion.

Over the past 20 years or so, I have been dismayed at the deterioration of our healthcare system as it has been taken over by giant corporations, both in the provision of services and in the payment for services. These corporations have created serious distances between healthcare providers and patients or consumers and inserted themselves into the decision-making process so that neither physicians, other providers, nor consumers have control of choices for healthcare.

This bill appears to be doing in our own State of Rhode Island what the federal government has failed to do nationally to save our healthcare.

If this bill frees us from the monopoly power of these corporations and returns the power to those who have been trained to provide healthcare services, as it appears to aspire to, Rhode Island will improve the healthcare of all of its citizens. It will also improve the climate for healthcare providers, especially those in primary care, making it easier for them to decide to stay in practice in this state.

There are provisions in this bill to ensure inclusion of all Rhode Island populations, which is a protection that is much needed in a state that is rich in its diversity.

We should have a little bit more emphasis on including people with disabilities. It may be possible that a consumer who is on Medicare or Medicaid and is appointed to the board will be disabled, but I think we should insist on it. What exists now for healthcare is woefully inadequate to provide the care we need, and our voices should be heard on this. Even hospitals in this state lack the proper equipment for people with significant mobility disabilities and are still using the techniques for lifting and transferring people with disabilities that existed in the 1950s. Unfortunately, those entities currently owning and running hospitals still have that same 1950s mindset regarding people with disabilities. We can do better, and the law (Americans with Disabilities Act) requires that we do.

Email: Annette@Access-Include.com
BlueSky: [@access-include.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/@access-include.bsky.social)
Podcast: www.Patreon.com/NothingWithoutUs

Overall, this legislation includes worthy goals with improvement of patient care as the top priority. I believe that doing so will result in a healthier Rhode Island and will better contain healthcare costs than the current corporations do. It appears that a great deal of thought has gone into the development of this bill, and we should support it and its goals.

Thank you to the sponsors who authored this bill and to the committee for its thoughtful consideration of it.

Submitted by,

Annette Bourbonniere

Annette Bourbonniere