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April 7, 2026

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

RE: S 2861 – An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Barbers, Hairdressers, Cosmeticians, Manicurists, and Estheticians

Dear Chair Murray:

Please accept this letter of support regarding S 2861, legislation that would allow electronic notifications, modernize language for notifications, synchronize renewal dates for certain license types, streamline licensing requirements across several license types, and update the unlicensed healthcare practices statute. This legislation was introduced at the request of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH).

Some of these healthcare professional licensing statutes have not been updated since the 1960s. The intent of the proposed legislation is to modernize the current statutes and to make it as clear and as easy as possible for people to apply for healthcare professional licenses. The enactment of the proposed legislation will help ensure that the impacted healthcare professional licensing applicants and licensees will experience more streamlined licensing renewal communications and due dates. The healthcare professional statutes that would be impacted by this bill are:

- Barbers, Hairdressers, Cosmeticians, Manicurists, and Estheticians (Chapter 5-10)
- Applied Behavior Analysts (Chapter 5-86)
- Chiropractic Physicians (Chapter 5-30)
- Dentists and Dental Hygienists (Chapter 5-31.1)
- Funeral Director/Embalmer and Funeral Service Establishments (Chapter 5-33.2)
- Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists (Chapter 5-63.2)
- Nurses (Chapter 5-34)
- Occupational Therapy (Chapter 5-40.1)
- Physical Therapists (Chapter 5-40)
- Physician Assistants (Chapter 5-54)
- Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline (Chapter 5-37)
- Psychologists (Chapter 5-44)
- Veterinary Practice (Chapter 5-25)

It would also impact the *Unlicensed Healthcare Practices* statute (Chapter 23-74), including removing the word *naturopathy* (RIDOH now licenses these healthcare professionals) and adding the words *massage* and *massage therapy* to the list of professionals that are not included as unlicensed healthcare practices.

These proposed amendments align with RIDOH's commitment to ensuring efficient and streamlined application and renewal processes, including enhanced customer satisfaction. The quicker applicants are

licensed, the quicker they can enter the healthcare workforce and serve individuals in need of such services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation. We are happy to answer any questions the members of the Committee may have about this important public health legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
The Honorable Peter A. Appollonio Jr.
Kristen Silvia, Director of Legislation and Deputy Chief of Staff
Patricia Resende, Director of Senate Policy