



April 7, 2026

The Honorable Melissa A. Murray  
Senate Health and Human Services Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Chairperson Murray and honorable members of the Rhode Island Senate Health and Human Services Committee, Thundermist Health Center supports S 2863 which would require health insurers to provide coverage for a 12-month supply of prescription hormone therapy dispensed at one time.

To be clear at the outset, this bill would not impose mandates for new health insurance coverage beyond what Rhode Island insurers currently offer, change the medical standards of care, or override medical judgement to make healthcare decisions in the best interests of a patient. This bill will provide flexibility to healthcare providers to make medically appropriate decisions with their patients, ensuring those who rely on prescription hormone therapy have consistent access to their necessary medications.

It is well-known that Rhode Island is facing a healthcare provider shortage. This is also true at Thundermist. While we work to recruit new healthcare professionals and for systems change that would shorten the time it takes from hiring a new provider to that provider being able to deliver care, our team works overtime to ensure that our over 65,000 patients have access to their necessary care, like maintenance medications. This bill is one more step to help ease the burden patients experience when their care is disrupted by the provider shortage and providers experience by reducing administrative time spent on refills and authorizations, while ensuring continuity of care in a medically safe way.

Disruptions in care cause negative health impacts that Rhode Islanders cannot afford. Individuals rely on hormone therapy for bone health, mood stability, and treatment of long-term and life-long conditions, including those whose bodies do not make hormones on their own. Typically, after a short period of finding the right dosage for a patient, medication and dosage prescribed remain stable, requiring only annual check-ins with a provider. Losing access to their medications can disrupt their daily lives and activities. This concern is acute for the many transgender Rhode Islanders that Thundermist serves as political efforts to restrict medically necessary care for transgender people take hold outside of Rhode Island. Our providers are regularly facing questions from patients considering rationing medication to build up their own reserve which risks

adverse effects from taking a lower dose than prescribed. These physical health impacts are compounded when patients face added stress and time burdens to get their care needs met.

While this bill is not a cure-all for larger systemic issues, it is a helpful step that would create another backstop for Rhode Islander's necessary healthcare and their ability to lead healthy lives. We thank Chairperson Murray and co-sponsors for submitting this important bill. We respectfully urge this committee to support passage of S 2863.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles T. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "C".

Chuck Jones

President and CEO