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May 5, 2026

Chair Melissa Murray
 Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
 Rhode Island State House
 Providence, RI 02903

Re: Opposition to SB2879 – An Act Relating to Business and Professions – The Primary Care Preservation Act

Dear Chair Murray and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO representing 80,000 members and 275 affiliated local unions, I write in opposition to Senate Bill 2879 introduced by Chairman DiPalma, which would allow physicians to charge patients administrative or operational fees to support overhead.

Across Rhode Island, approximately twenty-five percent of medical insurance recipients are covered by plans that have been collectively bargained by our affiliated unions. These hard-won benefits are not merely line items in a contract, they are a vital part of the health and economic security of Rhode Island families. SB2879 threatens that security by undermining the cost-containment measures that keep health coverage affordable and accessible.

By authorizing a physician practice to charge a “reasonable” practice support contribution, this bill could open the flood gates to an unquantifiable cost that we believe will be borne by our members and their families. It is unclear how “reasonable” will be defined and it is concerning that a member who sees multiple physicians throughout the year could be charged individually by each provider.

This legislation would drive up out-of-pocket costs for Rhode Islanders, many of whom are already struggling with rising health care expenses and the increasing cost of living. For some, these additional costs may make health coverage unaffordable altogether or may result in more Rhode Islanders forgoing care, leading to more extensive health complications in the future and widening disparities in access to care.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to oppose Senate Bill 2879 and protect Rhode Island families’ access to primary care services. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 401-751-7100 should you have any questions or require additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica A. Hammond
 Legislative Director, Rhode Island AFL-CIO

