

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S2889:
RELATING TO FOOD & DRUGS- UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT**

To: Health & Human Services Committee
From: Kelly Nevins, CEO, Women's Fund of Rhode Island
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Women's Fund of Rhode Island is in support of Senate Bill 2889, which would remove testosterone prescriptions from the state's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) and prohibit the collection and reporting of this data moving forward.

At its core, this bill is about bodily autonomy and medical privacy. Individuals should be able to access legally prescribed, medically necessary care without fear that their personal health information will be unnecessarily tracked, scrutinized, or potentially misused.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs were designed to address controlled substance misuse, particularly opioids. Expanding or maintaining surveillance of medications like testosterone, when prescribed appropriately for conditions such as hypogonadism, menopause-related care, or gender-affirming treatment, extends these systems beyond their original intent and raises serious concerns about privacy, stigma, and equity.

There is growing recognition nationally that over-surveillance of certain medications can have unintended consequences. Research and clinical guidance increasingly emphasize that when patients feel their care is being monitored or politicized, they may delay or avoid treatment altogether. This is especially true for communities already facing barriers in the healthcare system, including transgender individuals, women seeking hormone-based care, and those managing chronic conditions.

Testosterone is a medically necessary treatment for many people. For some, it is part of gender-affirming care; for others, it addresses hormonal imbalances that affect energy, bone density, sexual health, and overall well-being. In all cases, treatment decisions should be made between a patient and their provider, not subject to unnecessary surveillance infrastructure that was never designed for this purpose.

This bill also reflects a broader principle: not all medications require the same level of oversight. Public health tools must be used with precision. When applied too broadly, they risk undermining trust in the healthcare system and disproportionately impacting marginalized populations.

From an equity perspective, maintaining testosterone prescriptions in the PDMP can reinforce stigma and create additional barriers to care. Removing this data helps ensure that individuals can seek and maintain treatment without fear of being monitored in ways that are not clinically justified.

At a time when there is heightened concern about how health data is collected, shared, and potentially weaponized, Rhode Island has the opportunity to take a proactive stance in protecting patient privacy and autonomy.

For these reasons, the Women's Fund of Rhode Island respectfully urges you to pass Senate Bill 2889.

The mission of the Women's Fund of Rhode Island is to invest in women and girls through advocacy, research, and strategic partnership designed to achieve gender equity through systemic change. Our Women's Well-Being Index compares how well women fare against men on health, safety, economic security, education, and civic participation in every RI city/town. Our policy briefs are written in response to the data found on the Index. You can find more about our work at www.wfri.org.