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Meredith Frost Ingebretsen, MS, LMFT
Written Testimony Supporting S3026
4/2/26 Senate HHS hearing

As the owner of a private practice located in Warwick, Rhode Island, and the current President of the Rhode Island Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, I strongly support bill S3026. This bill will increase the ability of Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs) to provide care for clients by making it easier to obtain licensure in neighboring states, while also making Rhode Island a more desirable state in which to pursue licensure than it has been in the past.

Because Rhode Island is such a small state, nestled between Connecticut and Massachusetts, it is not uncommon for clinicians to experience difficulty maintaining continuity of care when clients move only a short distance and end up residing in another state. I have personally encountered this challenge on multiple occasions. In two separate instances, I was working with women recovering from abusive relationships. Both experienced severe PTSD symptoms, and in each case, it took over a year to establish a therapeutic relationship strong enough for them to feel safe and trusting in treatment.

Due to financial hardship, both women were required to move out of state—one just over the border into Connecticut and the other into Massachusetts. Both were deeply distressed to learn that I would not be able to easily obtain licensure in those states and that they would likely need to transition to new clinicians. Ultimately, both women chose to drive back into Rhode Island to continue therapy with me, despite the significant burden this placed on them as parents of young children. Improved licensure portability between neighboring states would have allowed me to continue providing their care without requiring them to endure additional stress and disruption during an already vulnerable time.

In addition to improving licensure portability, updating the qualifications for Rhode Island MFT licensure will help ensure that our state remains aligned with surrounding states. Historically, differing requirements have contributed to Rhode Island LMFT graduates leaving the state to pursue licensure elsewhere—some returning, but some not. Furthermore, establishing the requirement that 300 hours of supervised experience be completed in family or couple therapy will strengthen the integrity of the LMFT credential. This ensures that individuals licensed as Marriage and Family Therapists in Rhode Island are well trained and clinically competent in the specific field in which they practice.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Meredith Ingebretsen, MS, LMFT
Owner-Dauntless Psychotherapy Services, LLC
President- RIAMFT