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April 1, 2026

RE: Support for Senate Bill No. 3026

Dear Committee,

My name is Emily DiPalma, and I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in private practice at Little Blue Sky Wellness in Rhode Island, an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, and an adjunct faculty member in the University of Rhode Island's Couple and Family Therapy program. As a clinician, supervisor, and educator who is directly impacted by Rhode Island's current licensure requirements, I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 3026, which has the potential to positively impact stakeholders across the state.

SB 3026 aligns direct client contact hour requirements for licensure with regional and national standards, strengthens role-specific training by requiring a portion of supervised experience to be with couples and families, and reduces unnecessary barriers to licensure portability across states. SB 3026 modernizes Rhode Island's LMFT licensure pathway by:

- Aligning direct client contact hour requirements with national and regional norms,
- Strengthening role-specific training by requiring supervised experience with couples and families, and
- Reducing unnecessary barriers to licensure portability across state lines.

These reforms support workforce stability and access to care in a small, interconnected region where many residents live, work, and seek services across state borders, especially in the digital age.

During my own licensure process, I encountered significant challenges navigating inconsistent requirements across states, particularly as I pursued licensure in both Rhode Island and Massachusetts. These discrepancies created unnecessary administrative burden, delayed timelines, and added complexity at a critical stage of professional development. I continue to see this issue replicated among emerging clinicians, where highly qualified, well-trained candidates are delayed or discouraged by regulatory differences that do not meaningfully enhance clinical competency but do restrict workforce entry and mobility.

SB 3026 directly addresses these challenges by streamlining requirements and aligning Rhode Island with regional and national standards. These changes are not only practical but essential to strengthening the behavioral health workforce. By making the licensure process more efficient and predictable, this bill supports timely workforce entry, clinician retention, and access to care for individuals, couples, and families across Rhode Island.

For the reasons listed above, I respectfully urge you to support SB 3026 and vote in its favor.

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily DiPalma". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emily DiPalma, LMFT, AAMFT Approved Supervisor
Little Blue Sky Wellness
Licensed in Rhode Island & Massachusetts