



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Melissa Murray
Senate Health & Human Services Committee
Rhode Island Senate
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Support – S 3057

March 24, 2026

Chair Murray and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS), I am writing in support of the proposal S 3057 to establish a Primary Care Commission.

Primary care is the foundation of the healthcare system, yet in Rhode Island it is under significant strain. Challenges related to workforce shortages, reimbursement, administrative burden, and practice sustainability are impacting both access to care and the long-term stability of primary care practices.

RIMS has been actively engaged in discussions related to the development of a primary care-focused medical school at the University of Rhode Island. A consistent theme in this work has been the need to address underlying systemic challenges in order for such an initiative to succeed. The establishment of a Primary Care Commission is a critical step in that process.

A key area of focus should be teaching and training capacity. Strong, sustainable practices are essential to serving as effective training environments for future physicians. Without addressing the challenges facing current practices, it will be difficult to attract and retain medical students and residents in primary care.

Primary care physicians in Rhode Island face relatively low reimbursement, significant administrative demands, and increasing expectations to address complex patient and social needs. While recent efforts to increase Medicaid reimbursement and reduce prior authorization requirements are important steps forward, additional work is needed to ensure long-term sustainability.

In response to these pressures, many practices have consolidated, joined larger systems, or adopted alternative models such as concierge or direct primary care. These shifts reflect efforts to maintain viable practices and support a sustainable work environment.

The Primary Care Commission provides an opportunity to take a comprehensive and coordinated approach to these challenges, bringing together stakeholders to develop practical solutions that improve access, strengthen the workforce, and support high-quality patient care.

RIMS supports this proposal and appreciates the opportunity to have representation on the commission. Physician input will be essential to ensuring that recommendations are grounded in the realities of patient care and practice operations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nadine Himelfarb, MD
President