

My name is Jim Kingston and I reside in Providence. I am writing to OPPOSE House bill 3063 as drafted.

This bill and the Commission it would create starts from the premise that the major issue related to medical malpractice is the cost of malpractice insurance to providers. I believe a thorough study should also include the number of malpractice cases, deaths and significant adverse events caused by malpractice to RI patients.

As research at Johns Hopkins Medical School demonstrated, medical malpractice is the 3rd leading cause of death in the US. The Johns Hopkins study has been joined by other studies with some stating the death rate is lower and some stating the death rate is almost twice as high as the Johns Hopkins study. These and other studies show that the number of malpractice cases brought is a small fraction of the actual number of malpractice cases. Whichever study one believes to be most accurate, the bottom line is that many peoples lives have been seriously affected, both the actual patient as well as their families and loved ones.

While the cost of malpractice insurance does in fact result in higher costs to our health care system (some due to so-called defensive medicine fears) and individual providers, I believe that we must center the lives lost or seriously affected by medical malpractice in any such discussion and I hope that this bill can be amended to include that perspective as well.

Thank you for your consideration.