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**To:** [S Legislation](#)  
**Subject:** S3065 & S3066  
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March 24, 2026

The Honorable Chairwoman Melissa Murray  
Honorable Members of Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Senate Lounge  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903  
RE:

S3066 - Children's Mobile Response and Stabilization Services- Support

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Good afternoon Chairwoman and members of the Committee,

My name is Annette Coutu, and I am writing today as both a parent and a grandmother in strong support of S3065 and S3066, which establish and sustain Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) for children and families in Rhode Island.

For families like mine, the Mobile Response Program means knowing that no matter the time of day or night, there is support just a phone call away. It means being able to keep your child safe at home—24 hours a day, 7 days a week—without immediately turning to hospitalization. It means not having to retell your child's story over and over again to strangers in emergency rooms or facilities, hoping they will understand enough to help. Most importantly, it means keeping families together during the hardest moments.

I have experienced the impact of Tides Family Services across generations of my family.

Tides first came into our lives in 1999, after the unexpected loss of my son, Joel, in 1998. Our family was devastated, and my son Justin was struggling deeply with grief as he tried to remain in school while our family was falling apart. Tides stepped in and provided him with counseling and placement in their alternative school, where he was supported by people who truly understood his needs.

With that support, Justin was able to return to public school. When he struggled again, Tides was there. He returned to their school program, stayed through 11th grade, and ultimately graduated with honors from his home high school, along with completing Tollgate's vocational automotive program.

Today, Justin is 38 years old. He has a beautiful family, works as a laborer with Local 271, volunteers with Special Olympics and 401 A League of Our Own, and is raising a daughter with a rare disease. As a father, he has already turned to Tides again—this time to advocate for his own child in the school system—because he knew from experience they would stand by him.

That is the kind of long-term impact these services have.

More recently, when our family faced another crisis with a child, we did not hesitate—we called again. This time, the Mobile Response team came to us.

They supported not just the child in crisis, but our entire family. They provided in-home counseling, gave the child space to talk when needed, helped us navigate the health insurance system, school placement, and other challenges as they arose. They also made sure we had someone to call at any hour when things felt overwhelming.

They stayed with us. They worked with us. And they helped us get through that crisis—together.

By supporting these bills, you are ensuring that families have an option other than calling 911. You are supporting a system where trained behavioral health professionals respond quickly and appropriately, instead of relying on emergency rooms or law enforcement. You are also helping to reduce strain on an already overwhelmed behavioral health system.

Since launching, Tides' Mobile Response Program has already helped over 1,300 children across Rhode Island—preventing

over 1,300 emergency room visits and allowing children to receive care safely at home.

This program keeps families together. It builds support around a child instead of removing them from everything they know during a moment of crisis. It creates stability, connection, and hope.

As both a parent and a grandmother, I can tell you—there is nothing more important than knowing your child or grandchild can get help without being taken away from their home and family during a moment of crisis.

Rhode Island families need this program to be protected and sustained. We need to know it will be there when we call.

I strongly urge you to support S3065 and S3066.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,  
Annette Coutu  
Parent and Grandmother

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