



Director's Office

One Capitol Hill | Providence, RI 02908 | (401) 222-2280

May 21, 2026

The Honorable Melissa A. Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Senate Bill No. 3257 – An Act Relating To Human Services -- The Rhode Island Prescription Drug Purchasing Pool Act

Dear Chair Murray,

Thank you for providing the Department of Administration (“Department”) the opportunity to submit our comments in response to Senate Bill No. 3257, which requires the Department to establish a state-run prescription drug purchasing pool, available for participation by nonstate public employers, private employers, and health insurance carriers.

While the Department appreciates the intent of the bill, we have serious concerns regarding the administrability of the legislation. State employees automatically receive prescription coverage when they enroll in one of the State's Anchor medical plans. This prescription coverage is presently administered by CVS Caremark, which was selected following a competitive RFP solicitation process. CVS Caremark submitted its bid based on known enrollment numbers and prescription coverage for which they need to provide administrative support for the State and its employees. Extending our CVS Caremark contract beyond state employees and retirees as contemplated in the statute would represent a material change to the contract and could potentially impact rates and coverage.

Further, this legislation is an unfunded mandate as the Department does not have the necessary FTEs or resources required to establish or administer a prescription drug purchasing pool to private employers. HealthSource RI is not resourced to act as a Pharmacy Benefit Manager. Similarly, the Office of Employee Benefits within the Division of Human Resources is only resourced to administer the coverage for active State employees and retirees. Finally, the program would also require resources to develop an enrollment platform for these external entities.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to share its comments with the Committee. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact my office at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas A. Verdi".

Thomas A. Verdi
Acting Director, Department of Administration

cc: The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Health & Human Services
The Honorable Louis P. DiPalma
Kristen Silvia, Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Legislation
Robin Dionne, Committee Clerk