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## Legislative Impact Statement

To: Senator Murray, Chairperson  
From: Elisabeth Hubbard, Executive Secretary  
Re: 26 Senate 2689 AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT --  
OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Thursday, March 12, 2026

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Legislation Committee has developed a Legislative Impact Statement on the bill listed below. The Commission would be pleased to present testimony to the committee. Please contact me (462-0110) if testimony is desired or for additional information.

Introduced by Senator Murray

This bill would mandate that EOHHAS assemble a network of equity zones where local multisector groups of nonprofits, service providers, advocates, community members, state agencies, and municipalities can address social factors of health at a local level.

### **Legislation Committee finds this bill Beneficial**

Health Equity Zones (HEZs) help to coordinate local community-based providers, advocacy organizations, businesses and agencies to improve the health and quality of life for residents in their region. They rely on local expertise and community engagement so that their work will provide the best outcome for their community. The Rhode Island Department of Health has published reports that demonstrate that the work of health equity zones reduces the rate of chronic health conditions and lowers the cost of public insurance for the state.

This bill would provide stable funding for the HEZ's to continue their services. It would also provide resources for the HEZs to build on their work by facilitating coordination with government agencies and providing technical assistance to improve their activities. As we believe that the work of the HEZs should be properly funded and supported, the Commission supports this bill.

cc: Representative Tanzi

Rico Vota, Governor's Office of Legislative Affairs