



RHODE ISLAND
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AFT AFL-CIO

March 14, 2024

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chairman, House Corporations Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: **Opposition to House Bill – H 7082**

Dear Chairman Solomon:

On behalf of the 12,000 members of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals, I am writing in opposition to the proposed legislation H 7082, which would impose a medical loss ratio on dental benefit plans.

Our dental premiums have remained stable, and the members and their dependents enrolled in our program have enjoyed excellent coverage. If this bill is passed in its current form, it will result in a significant increase in premiums for our organization, higher out-of-pocket costs for our members, and it threatens to disrupt the balance of access and affordability that all Rhode Islanders currently experience when it comes to their dental care.

Dental insurance is different from medical insurance, both in product design and price. Imposing a loss ratio meant for medical insurance onto our dental program without a full understanding of the industry would be irresponsible governance by the legislature. This is evident in Massachusetts, where a 2022 ballot referendum set an arbitrary and excessive dental loss ratio, which actuarial consultant, Milliman, estimates will result in a 38% increase in patient premiums. While the Massachusetts Department of Insurance has yet to release these problematic regulations, at least five dental carriers have already announced plans to abandon the individual and small group market.

Other states looking at this issue are opting for reporting bills to better understand the impacts on all stakeholders. This approach mirrors model legislation released by the National Coalition of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) and is supported by the American Dental Association and the National Association of Dental Plans. Rhode Islanders would be better served if the state took the same approach.

For these reasons, the R. I. Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals and its member locals strongly *oppose House Bill 7082*.

Thank you for your consideration of our opposition on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Flynn".

Frank Flynn, President

356 SMITH STREET PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02908-3761 (401) 273-9800 FAX (401) 331-8815

• Francis J. Flynn, President • Bonnie Horta, Executive Assistant • Colleen A. Callahan, Director of Professional Issues •
• Michael J. Mullane, Field Representative • James A. Parisi, Field Representative •
• Christopher Lambert, Field Representative • Maria Manzi, Administrative Assistant •