

February 12, 2025



RI Department of Health
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Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 771
www.health.ri.gov

The Honorable Joseph M. McNamara
Chair
House Committee on Education
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

H 5087 – An Act Relating to Education – The Children’s Cardiac Safety Act

Dear Chair McNamara:

Please accept this letter on H 5087, legislation that would establish "The Children's Cardiac Safety Act" and provide for childhood cardiac screening based on modules that incorporate current best practices. This Act would take effect on January 1, 2026.

Although the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) applauds the intent of the legislation, RIDOH is unable to implement the provisions pertaining to RIDOH without adequate resources. The legislation would require funding and staff support to implement the management of an additional database to report screening and referral practices, analyze reported data, develop annual reporting (including related recommendations), provide technical assistance and support to schools and healthcare professionals required to prepare and submit data and reporting, support development and monitoring of training modules for healthcare professionals, and engage in development of educational materials.

The proposed legislation mandates prescriptive language for protocols for cardiac screening, which would limit the State’s ability to ensure updates based on newer evidence-based practice emerging in the future. There is already an existing State statute that is broader in context and achieves similar goals. See: [“Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act”](#). Please also be informed that the Rhode Island Interscholastic League’s existing pre-participation physical evaluation (PPE) form ([RI Interscholastic League \(RIIL\)](#)) includes screening on heart health conditions that align with the [American Academy of Pediatrics’ recommended PPE form](#). Bills similar to H 5087 have been introduced in prior years in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Iowa, but none appear to have been enacted into law.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation and would be happy to work with the sponsor(s) and members of the Committee to propose amendments and/or to identify the resources needed to implement the actions included in the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD
Director

CC: The Honorable Lauren H. Carson
The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Education
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy
