



March 5, 2025

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chairman

Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee

Rhode Island State House

82 Smith Street

Providence, RI 02903

Re: Testimony in Support of Proposed Changes to the Minimum Staffing Levels in Article 10 of H5076

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

On behalf of LeadingAge RI, which represents non-profit nursing homes and senior care providers across the state, I am writing to express our strong support for the Governor's proposed Article 10 Staffing provisions, found on page 250, line 17 through page 257, line 21 of the FY 2026 budget bill.

Rhode Island's long-term care sector is experiencing a severe workforce crisis, making it increasingly difficult for nursing homes to comply with the state's highly stringent staffing requirements. Despite extensive recruitment and retention efforts, 64 out of 74 nursing homes in Rhode Island fell short of the required staffing ratios in Q3 of 2023. As a result, under the current penalty structure, these facilities would have faced potential fines exceeding \$11 million in just one quarter—a financial burden that is completely unsustainable.

Governor McKee recognized this crisis by issuing an Executive Order to suspend these fines, and we appreciate his leadership in taking that action. However, further relief is necessary to ensure the stability of nursing home operations and continued access to care for Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents. Without this action, we risk additional nursing home closures, hospital discharge backlogs, and an overall reduction in long-term care access across the state.

Article 10 is a practical and necessary step toward addressing this crisis. Rather than punishing nursing homes that are already struggling to recruit and retain staff, we urge the General Assembly to focus on sustainable workforce development solutions and adequate Medicaid funding to support these critical services.

We respectfully request your support for this portion of Article 10 and look forward to working with you to implement policies that prioritize quality care, workforce stability, and the long-term viability of Rhode Island's nursing homes.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional information or discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. McMahon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Francis X. McMahon, Esq.

LeadingAge RI