



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Marvin Abney
House Finance Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: RIDOH Budget – Loan Repayment

SUPPORT

March 25, 2025

Dear Chair Abney,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS), I am writing to express our strong support for the FY 2026 budget article that invests \$200,000 in general revenue to support the Rhode Island Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (RI HPLRP), with an additional \$200,000 in matching funds.

Since its inception in 1994, the RI HPLRP has provided over \$11.2 million in loan repayment awards to more than 270 licensed healthcare professionals who have committed to serving in Rhode Island's medically underserved areas. In the last decade alone, 227 professionals—including 41 physicians and 45 dentists—have received support through this program. More than 100,000 Rhode Islanders have received care from a current or former program participant, and 91% of past recipients remain licensed and practicing in Rhode Island after completing their service commitment.

RIMS has proudly supported this program not just in spirit, but financially—contributing over \$100,000 since 2021 through the Rhode Island Medical Society Medical Purpose Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation. We remain one of several local organizations that help sustain the program's mission each year.

Despite record-breaking participation in 2024—with 53 clinicians enrolled and over \$1.4 million distributed—the demand continues to outpace available funds. Last year, 42% of eligible applicants could not be funded, leaving a \$1.77 million funding gap. As federal match requirements are reinstated for 2026, it is critical that the state invests in this proven, high-impact program to ensure Rhode Islanders can continue to access timely, high-quality care in all communities.

We respectfully urge the General Assembly to approve the \$200,000 general revenue appropriation to strengthen Rhode Island's primary care and pediatric workforce, retain clinicians in high-need areas, and match critical federal resources. This modest state investment will help sustain and expand a program with a demonstrable return on investment for the health of our state.

Thank you for your continued commitment to healthcare access and workforce development in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Kara Stavros, MD
President