



March 11, 2024

Subject: Collaboration on Expanding Licensure Pathways for Lactation Workers - Opposition to Current Draft of H-7882

Dear Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

As the Political Director of SEIU 1199NE, representing 5,000 healthcare and service workers in Rhode Island, including lactation consultants at Women & Infants Hospital, I am writing to express our stance on Bill H-7882. We support the bill's goal of expanding licensure pathways for all lactation workers, including Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs) and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs). However, we oppose the bill's existing draft due to concerns regarding the proposed equating of CLCs with IBCLCs.

Both CLCs and IBCLCs serve vital roles in supporting maternal and infant health, with IBCLCs undergoing extensive education and clinical training surpassing the one-week program for CLCs. While IBCLCs are equipped to address complex lactation issues stemming from medical complications during the postpartum period, CLCs provide essential support and guidance to mothers within their scope of practice. Therefore, we advocate for amendments that uphold the essential distinctions between CLC and IBCLC roles, maintaining high standards of lactation care while establishing accessible paths to both CLC and IBCLC certification.

We are actively collaborating with the bill's authors and sponsors to develop a version of this bill that we can all support. Our goal is to promote breastfeeding health and well-being while upholding the integrity of lactation care standards.

Sincerely,

Alex Moore, Political Director

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