



March 18, 2025

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for H5432

Chair Donovan and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H5432, which would prohibit health insurance providers from requiring preauthorization for in-network mental health or substance use disorder services

My name is Margaret Holland McDuff, and I am CEO of FSRI. FSRI is a behavioral health and social service organization delivering over 30 programs to support children, families and individuals across the state. We employ over 300 professionals including social workers, substance use counselors, case managers, community health workers, peer support specialists, teachers, nurses, residential counselors, and more. FSRI has been serving Rhode Islanders for decades, including programming to support healthy child development, provide essential behavioral health services, and coordinate crisis intervention programs that help children and families thrive.

Recently, FSRI went live as a Rhode Island state certified CCBHC (Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic) for Providence, providing a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use services to anyone seeking care, regardless of diagnosis and insurance status. Through our decades of experience working in this area, we understand the importance of immediate access to services. This bill is important in that it helps remove barriers to care, so that when an individual is ready to access treatment, they will not face administrative delays that can be detrimental to their health.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of H5432, and please feel free to contact me with any questions or follow-up.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Margaret Holland McDuff'.

Margaret Holland McDuff
CEO