



Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
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March 27, 2025

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan, Chairwoman  
House Committee on Health & Human Services  
State House  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: **2025 H 5257**-- An Act Relating to Health and Safety -- Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board Act

Dear Chairwoman Donovan:

Please accept this letter of opposition to **2025 H 5257**, legislation which would create the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board Act, which was vetoed by the Governor in 2024.

This legislation would establish an entirely new body, funded by the State to perform the required work recommended by the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board” (the Board). The Board would be composed of several state agency directors and stakeholders representing the private sector. The Board would be empowered to advise on market conditions, wages and benefits, and recommend minimum compensation and working standards in the nursing facility industry.

The requirements in this legislation may not contribute to resolve the need for critical nursing home urgencies needed to support residents, workers, and operators of long- term facilities. If enacted, **2025 H-5257** could increase nursing facility costs, and therefore, recommend rate increases calculated by means not aligned with the appropriate, transparent, and accountable rate setting and budget processes utilized by the State of Rhode Island.

The authority granted in this legislation to an appointed board would cause duplication and/or conflict with existing powers and duties currently delegated to RIDOH, as well as the EOHHS/Rhode Island Medicaid Program in Rhode Island General Law. Also, standards set by the Board would serve as minimum benchmarks for nursing home employment. These standards set by the Board may conflict with federal Medicaid rules and regulations and the State’s comprehensive and transparent rules and regulations, rate setting, and appropriations processes.

The Medicaid Program will continue to work in partnership with the General Assembly, our Rhode Island community partners, and our shared constituency to ensure that individuals receive quality care. I also appreciate your leadership and hard work on behalf of all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

Kristin Pono Sousa  
Rhode Island Medicaid Program Director  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services

CC: Honorable Members of the House Committee Health & Human Services  
Honorable Scott A. Slater  
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy