



March 31, 2025

(Submitted electronically via HouseHealthandHumanServices@rilegislature.gov)

The Honorable Rep. Susan Donovan
Chair, House Committee on Health and Human Services
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: H5120 - An Act Relating To Insurance -- Benefit Determination And Utilization Review Act

Dear Chair Susan Donovan and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

Please accept the Rhode Island Health Center Association's letter of **support** for **House Bill 5120**, which seeks to reform prior authorization requirements for primary care services.

Rhode Island's eight community health centers provide primary medical, behavioral, and dental care for 210,125 individuals; over half are publicly insured, and a quarter have private insurance. In recent years, health centers have experienced a 25% increase in the demand for primary care medical services.

Primary care is a comprehensive, cost-effective system of care that benefits both individuals and the health care system as a whole. By emphasizing prevention, chronic disease management, and coordinated care, primary care can lead to improved health outcomes and help mitigate the need for costly emergency room visits and hospitalizations.

Unfortunately, a combination of workforce shortages and practice closures has led to significant challenges in accessing primary care in Rhode Island. Many individuals are finding it increasingly difficult to find a primary care provider, while existing providers face mounting pressures to meet the needs of their patients.

The current process of prior authorization, intended to confirm the medical necessity of services and manage costs, has introduced considerable administrative burdens to already overwhelmed primary care providers. Navigating this system can result in delays in patient care, which impacts health outcomes and leads to costly health care alternatives. Reforming prior-authorization processes is a step towards addressing the current primary care challenges in our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

M. Campbell

Melissa Campbell
Policy Manager
RI Health Center Association

The Rhode Island Health Center Association members include:
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care Inc. ~ Comprehensive Community Action Program
East Bay Community Action Program ~ Providence Community Health Centers
Thundermist Health Center ~ Tri-County Community Action Agency
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care ~ Wood River Health