



RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Robert Craven
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

2024-HB 7451

SUPPORT

March 5, 2024

Dear Chairperson Craven:

The Rhode Island Medical Society would like to thank Representative Solomon for introducing H 7451 - An Act Relating to State Affairs And Government - Corrections Department. This bill establishes a program within the adult correctional institution to permit medication assisted treatment approved by the FDA to be provided for the treatment of opioid use disorder to any incarcerated individual.

Rhode Island historically has been a leader in providing Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) to incarcerated individuals and was the first state in the country to screen every person entering the correction system for opioid use disorder (OUD) and offering all three forms of medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) – buprenorphine, methadone, and extended-release naltrexone – in conjunction with counseling.

According to A Review of in United States Jails and Prisonsⁱ “The use of MAT, and specifically buprenorphine, to address OUD is considered the gold standard of care in the community and the efficacy of MAT to reduce opiate withdrawal, curb cravings, and support positive health, behavioral health, and criminal justice outcomes, including reductions is overdose deaths and recidivism, has gained national attention from criminal justice advocacy groups and policymakers. We strongly encourage you and your committee members to act favorably on this important legislation.

Given these compelling findings and the national attention garnered by the success of MAT programs in correctional settings, I urge you and your committee members to act favorably on this important legislation. By expanding access to MAT within our correctional facilities, we can not only improve the health and well-being of incarcerated individuals but also contribute to safer communities and reduce the burden on our criminal justice system.

Founded in 1812, the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS) is the eighth oldest medical society in the country. RIMS is the vehicle by which the medical community in Rhode Island meets the evolving challenges of medical practice and quality patient care.

Please let us know if we can provide any additional information or if you have any questions on our testimony. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Heather Smith, MD, MPH
President

ⁱ <https://cchcs.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/MAT-in-United-States-Jails-and-PrisonsFinal.pdf>