

Roberta DiMezza

From: Daisy Bassen <dbassen@thrivebhri.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 3:06 PM
To: House Judiciary Committee
Cc: RISHieldBill@gmail.com
Subject: in support of H7577

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

March 5, 2024

Dear Chairperson Craven:

I am writing on behalf of Thrive Behavioral Health in strong support of H7577, the Health Care Provider Shield Bill. We are the community mental health center serving Rhode Islanders of all ages with mental illness living in Kent County as well as Providence and East Bay. Our organization views this legislation as critical to protect our members and the patients and families we serve.

This legislation is necessary because hostile laws passed in other laws have the potential to interfere with delivery of health care in Rhode Island and create a chilling effect for our provider community and the patients for whom we care.

This legislation is about Rhode Island's ability to protect health care providers, patients and access to essential care. The bill protects established, best-practice medical care that is legal in Rhode Island and ensures our local providers and health care infrastructure aren't negatively impacted by hostile laws in other states.

It is imperative that Rhode Island remains a competitive practice environment to ensure the viability of our health delivery system. This common-sense legislation brings Rhode Island in line with 11 states, including neighboring Massachusetts and Connecticut.

More than 20 states have enacted bans on essential, established medical care which exert extraordinary control over people's lives and **even impose civil and criminal penalties on providers for practicing medicine in line with the professional standards of care. These bans have the potential to cross state lines and impact providers here.**

Out-of-state laws banning access to essential medical care takes away people's freedom to make important medical decisions for themselves and their families, informed by guidance from trusted providers, and replaces it with the wishes of politicians. That's not the Rhode Island way. It's not the Thrive way either.

We are guided in our advocacy by policy statements made by both the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the American Psychiatric Association, organizations which spend significant time and effort to review the current research on best practices for the treatment of mental illness and fostering mental health and well-being. Thrive Behavioral Health's first guiding principle is to treat every person with dignity and respect which requires that they have access to the care they need provided by clinicians they trust, within their communities.

We are grateful for the support the legislature has shown the provider community in the past and respectfully request your continued support through passage of this vital legislation. Please contact me if I can provide any additional information or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Daisy Bassen MD DFAACAP
Medical Director
Thrive Behavioral Health
2756 Post Road, Ste 104
Warwick, RI 02886
(401) 738-1338 ext. 428



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