

# Jonathan Leviss MD

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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

HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov

March 5, 2024

Dear Chairperson Craven and Members of the Committee:

I am a resident of Barrington since 2004 and a primary care physician practicing in RI since 2005; I also write on behalf of the RI Chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP), as co-chair of the Health and Public Policy Committee, to urge strong support of H7577, the Health Care Provider Shield Bill.

The ACP is a diverse community of internal medicine specialists and subspecialists united by a commitment to excellence; ACP is the largest medical-specialty society in the world with over 161,000 members. The ACP views this legislation as critical to protect our providers, our health system, and the patients we serve. This legislation is core to the ACP's 2024 advocacy goal of "Protecting the patient-physician relationship through the adoption of policies that safeguard access to reproductive health care, LGBTQ+ and gender-affirming care...." (<https://www.acponline.org/advocacy>).

My experience as a physician at Thundermist Health Centers, the Providence Community Health Centers, Brown Physicians Inc., and as faculty at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University reinforces my own similar views.

This legislation is necessary because hostile laws passed in other states 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 are not negatively impacted by hostile laws in other states.

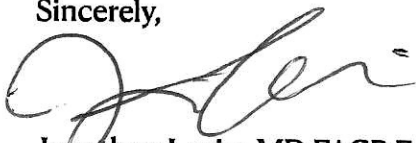
Additionally, this common-sense legislation brings Rhode Island in line with 11 states, including neighboring Massachusetts and Connecticut.

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.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Leviss', written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Leviss MD FACP FAMIA

Co-Chair, Health and Public Policy Committee, RI ACP Chapter

Primary Care Physician, Brown Physicians Inc.

Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University