



March 5, 2024

House Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island State House
HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov

Re: **Testimony SUPPORTING House Bill 7577**

Dear Chair Craven and Honorable Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in **support of House Bill 7577**, The Healthcare Provider Shield Act.

ABC-RI represents the rights and interests of residents of long-term care. We support HB7577 because all Rhode Islanders have the right to appropriate best-practice healthcare, and this includes transgender Rhode Islanders and gender-affirming medical care.

While eleven other states have passed similar legislation, more than twenty states have enacted bans on essential, established medical care which even impose civil and criminal penalties on providers. These bans have the potential to cross state lines and impact providers here. Therefore, we also need laws like HB 7577 to protect those providing the care and ensure that our providers and infrastructure aren't harmed by hostile laws in other states.

Thank you for your time and attention, for your strong record of protecting healthcare rights, and for all of your work on behalf of all Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Gerard,
ABC-RI