

In strong support of HB 7577

The future is MORE inclusive! This is my motto for the year. We need to protect the rights of all of us and let our pursuit of happiness blossom, by not letting our freedoms be limited by bigots and a small vocal group of morality police.

I am in strong support of HB 7577. This bill is designed to protect doctors and healthcare practitioners who provide gender-affirming and reproductive medical care from the laws THAT other states are creating to ban and prohibit access to healthcare services. This legislation is necessary because these laws have the potential to interfere with delivery of health care in Rhode Island.

We have passed laws to protect patient's access to care and now we need to pass protection for the providers of these health care services.

The bill is supported by state health care associations and provider members including the Rhode Island Medical Society, Rhode Island Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Rhode Island Health Center Association, ABC -RI, Open Door Health, Thundermist Health Center, Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Inc., RI National Association of Social Workers, and the Rhode Island Public Health Institute.

“As multiple states have passed bans on abortion and transgender health care in recent years, authorities in some states, such as Texas, have also sought to intimidate or otherwise punish physicians or facilities in other states who provide such essential care to their residents. Eleven other states – including

Massachusetts and Connecticut – and the District of Columbia have already passed health care shield laws to protect providers and patients and ensure their states remain desirable places to practice medicine. ([Alquist article](#))

There is no middle ground on this issue. If we do not move to protect our healthcare providers and by extension, their patients, then we are all at risk of loss of freedom and access to healthcare. Doctors, physicians and healthcare providers want to practice in states that offer them protection to provide services, not having to answer to lawyers first before providing care.

Please to act now to protect Rhode Island's health care system, our providers and those seeking essential medical care.

I urge you to vote in support of HB 7577 and move the bill out of committee and to a floor vote.

san shoppell, riverside, RI