



Howard Dulude
Interim President

February 4, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chairman, House Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: SUPPORT – H.5179

Dear Chairman Craven:

The Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) and its member strongly support H.5179, an act which reduces pre and post judgement interest in civil actions from 12% to a rate determined by average accepted auction price for last auction of 52 week U.S. treasury bills, and limits interest accrual to the filing date of the civil action.

HARI and its members believe high judgement interest rates are exacerbating the healthcare professional workforce shortage and challenges faced by the care delivery system in Rhode Island. These high interest rates impose a heavier financial burden on providers in Rhode Island compared to their counterparts in neighboring states by inflating settlements and creating pressure on insurance premiums making malpractice insurance less affordable for healthcare providers. Consequently, the high cost of insurance and settlements diminishes the opportunity for investments in medical equipment, staff training, and other resources necessary for delivering quality care. Combined these factors create a disincentive for healthcare providers to practice in Rhode Island leading to shortages of healthcare professionals and limited access to specialized care for many Rhode Islanders.

By reducing the judgement interest rate, the RI legislature has an opportunity to alleviate this burden on healthcare providers and promote greater stability in the healthcare system. Lowering interest rates would not only reduce the financial strain on hospitals and healthcare providers but also make professional liability insurance more affordable and accessible, thereby ensuring continued access to quality care for all individuals.

For these reasons HARI and its members support passage of H.5179 and appreciate your commitment to the well-being of our community and your ongoing efforts to strengthen healthcare in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa P. Tomasso", written over a thin horizontal line.

Lisa P. Tomasso
Senior Vice President