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April 1, 2025

To: Chairman Craven, Vice Chairs Hagan McEntee and Knight, and members of the House Judiciary Committee.

RE: In support of RI H5260 AN ACT RELATING TO DELINQUENT AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN

From: Brian Sullivan, President & CEO, Ocean Tides Inc.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H5260. I write to you representing Ocean Tides Inc., a DCYF contracted residential treatment center and junior/senior high school located in Narragansett, RI. The program was established in 1975 with a focus of providing residential, clinical and education services to adolescent males involved in the juvenile justice system in RI.

The Ocean Tides program focuses on reunification of our clients and families, from the first day a youth enters the program family participation in treatment is a core aspect of our program. Many of our youth are successfully able to reunite with their families and that is the best outcome. But for some of our youth this is not possible. Some of this is due to conflict within the family, some of it may be related to the charges that brought them into the Juvenile Justice system. For others they no longer have their birth parents and have been living with aging grandparents, who while loving, caring, and dedicated may be entering the part of life when someone needs to care for them due to their age and circumstances.

In my nearly thirty years' experience of working with adolescent youth and the raising of three young men of my own I am convinced that precious few adolescents are prepared for independence at the age of 18. In a world with rapidly escalating housing costs, inflationary costs on food, and the need for education and professional development all the youth in RI need the assistance of others to develop into contributing members of their community.

So much is being invested in the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of RI's Juvenile Justice youth it is completely counterintuitive to not allow them to participate in the Voluntary Extension of Care. While these young people may have entered state care due to negative actions and behaviors that isn't why they need our support as they transition from childhood to adulthood all youth need that support. This is an opportunity to apply resources in a positive way to help RI youth reach positive outcomes.

Providence Campus
260 Highland Avenue
Providence, RI 02906
401.861.3778

Gallogly Center
20 Hillside Avenue
Providence, RI 02906
401.273.0731



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EDUCATION

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Brian J. Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being the most prominent.

President & CEO
Ocean Tides Inc.