



# Rhode Island Health Care Association

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## **Testimony in Support of H 7030 Substitute A Healthcare Worker Platform Act**

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is John Gage, President and CEO of the Rhode Island Health Care Association (RIHCA), which represents approximately 80 percent of the nursing facilities in Rhode Island. I respectfully submit testimony in support of H 7030 Substitute A.

Rhode Island's long-term care sector continues to rely on a range of supplemental staffing models to meet resident care needs, including traditional nursing service agencies and, increasingly, technology-based healthcare worker platforms. As these platforms have grown, they have operated largely outside of the regulatory framework that governs licensed nurse service agencies. This bill takes an important and measured step toward closing that gap.

### **Establishing a Level Regulatory Playing Field**

H 7030 Substitute A appropriately recognizes that healthcare worker platforms function in many ways like traditional staffing agencies and should be subject to similar standards. By requiring licensure through the Department of Health, the bill ensures that platforms meet baseline expectations for oversight and accountability.

Importantly, the bill mirrors key protections already required of nurse service agencies, including:

- Criminal background checks
- Verification of credentials and scope of practice
- Required training and competency standards
- Compliance with health and vaccination requirements
- Maintenance of appropriate insurance coverage

This alignment promotes consistency across staffing models and ensures that all entities supplying healthcare workers into licensed facilities are held to comparable standards.

### **Enhancing Patient Safety and Quality of Care**

By placing responsibility on the platform to ensure worker compliance—regardless of employment classification—the bill strengthens accountability and helps ensure that individuals providing care in our facilities are properly vetted, trained, and qualified.

The inclusion of training requirements and ongoing competency development is particularly important in long-term care settings, where resident acuity and regulatory expectations are high.

*“Setting the Pace in Nursing Home Care”*

A non-profit organization of proprietary and non-proprietary long term health care facilities dedicated to improving health care of the convalescent and chronically ill of all ages. An equal opportunity employer.

## **Improving Transparency and Oversight**

The bill's inspection, investigation, and reporting provisions provide the state with important tools to better understand how these platforms operate and their impact on the healthcare system. Annual reporting on pay rates, utilization, and workforce activity will help inform policymakers and regulators as this segment of the workforce continues to evolve.

Additionally, the ability to investigate platforms when worker-related quality issues arise ensures that oversight is not limited solely to facilities, but extends to the entities supplying the workforce.

## **Protecting Workforce Mobility**

The bill includes important worker protections, such as prohibiting non-compete-style restrictions and fees that would prevent a healthcare worker from transitioning to permanent employment with a facility. These provisions support workforce mobility and help facilities recruit and retain staff in a highly competitive labor market.

## **Supporting Fairness in the Staffing Market**

By requiring platforms to comply with existing rate and markup limitations, the bill helps ensure that all staffing entities operate under the same financial constraints, preventing circumvention of established safeguards and promoting fairness across the market.

## **Conclusion**

H 7030 Substitute A represents a thoughtful approach to modernizing Rhode Island's oversight of supplemental healthcare staffing. It does not seek to restrict innovation, but rather to ensure that new models operate with the same level of accountability and transparency as existing ones.

By aligning healthcare worker platforms with the established standards for nurse service agencies, this legislation enhances patient safety, supports providers, and promotes a more consistent and equitable regulatory environment.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support passage of H 7030 Substitute A.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H 7030 Substitute A.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Gage  
President & CEO  
Rhode Island Health Care Association