



Rhode Island Health Care Association

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2026-H7030

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY – HEALTHCARE WORKER PLATFORM ACT

Date: January 29, 2026

Position: Oppose

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Rhode Island Health Care Association (RIHCA). RIHCA is a trade association that represents sixty-two (62) of the nursing facilities in the State of Rhode Island, representing 80% of the profession.

House Bill 8030, as currently drafted, raises significant concerns regarding patient safety, workforce accountability, and regulatory parity within Rhode Island’s healthcare system. Unlike licensed healthcare staffing agencies, healthcare worker platforms proposed under this legislation are not subject to the comprehensive protections and safeguards that the General Assembly has already deemed necessary to protect residents, facilities, and workers alike. The bill lacks fundamental requirements that are standard under existing staffing agency law, including—but not limited to—rate caps, verification of clinical competencies, national criminal background checks, workers’ compensation coverage, and clear guidance regarding health screenings and vaccination requirements.

Under this legislation, individuals placed through these platforms would effectively function as freelance healthcare workers, operating without a traditional employer and without the oversight and accountability that currently exists within regulated staffing models. This creates serious gaps in responsibility and liability. Facilities could be left uncertain as to who bears responsibility for credentialing, supervision, insurance coverage, and workplace injuries. Most concerning, residents and patients would be exposed to caregivers who may not have undergone appropriate vetting or demonstrated required competencies.

Rhode Island has spent years strengthening oversight of staffing agencies precisely because unregulated labor models create risk. House Bill 7030 would move the state in the opposite direction by authorizing a parallel workforce system that operates outside of those safeguards. This effectively introduces a “wild west” environment into healthcare facilities—one where there is minimal accountability, inconsistent standards, and increased risk to some of our most vulnerable populations.

We want to be clear that we are not opposed to innovation or the thoughtful integration of technology-based platforms into the healthcare workforce. There may be a role for these platforms in addressing workforce shortages if they are properly regulated. However, any legislation authorizing such models must include protections that mirror those already required of staffing agencies, ensuring a level playing field and maintaining the safety and integrity of care delivery.

“Setting the Pace in Nursing Home Care”

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For these reasons, while we are open to continued dialogue and potential amendments, we cannot support House Bill 7030 in its current form and respectfully urge the committee to hold the bill for further study and revision.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Gage". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping loop on the left side and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John E. Gage, MBA, NHA
President & CEO