



2025 POLICY PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT:

1) **Solving for Early Educator Staffing Crisis:**

Pass the Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act ([H5200/Cano](#)) to:

- Invest \$2.5 million to continue the Child Care WAGE\$ national model program to provide substantial wage supplements to recognize, reward, and retain qualified and skilled early educators with CDAs, associate's, and bachelor's degrees. This program will end in the summer without new funding.
- Invest \$5 million to continue retention bonuses @ \$3,000/year for some early educators – those who are lower-wage, consistent, frontline child care staff -- beyond the projected end date in September 2024 to prevent loss of staff/closure of more classrooms and programs.

2) **Expand and Strengthen RI Childcare System:** Remove the outdated child support enforcement requirement. Only a few states have ever imposed this requirement and those that did are removing it 2025 Legislative and Budget Detailed Priorities from the subsidy process (even Mississippi). Additionally, we support making childcare for educators permanent. 9 of 10 families cannot afford childcare, including our early educators. We support the funding needed to continue this effort.

3) **Paid Family Leave:** We are looking to increase the wage replacement rate to 85% of the average weekly wage, an expansion of the taxable contribution base to the federal Social Security tax (\$165K), an inclusive family definition, and an opt-in for sole proprietors, gig workers, and contract workers. (H6066)

4) **Support Funding for RIPTA:** Public transportation expands women's access to employment, education, healthcare, and social activities, fostering greater economic independence and participation in society. Women often face greater challenges in accessing transportation compared to men, especially if they lack access to a private vehicle. Additionally, Public transportation can significantly reduce transportation costs, freeing up financial resources for other priorities like childcare, healthcare, and education. Currently, RIPTA needs 31 million dollars to keep up with operational costs. We support being able to prioritize funding to help RIPTA to keep necessary operations. (H6020/S342)

5) **Revenue for RI:** Tax top 1% income earners with a 3% surtax on taxable income above \$625,000, affecting 5,700 filers and raising \$190M in revenue for the state ([S329/H5473](#))

HEALTH & SAFETY

1) **Reimbursement for Lactation consultants and midwifery:** There is an increasing focus on maternal and child health due to poor outcomes. Medicaid coverage is provided for nearly 1/3 of the state residents but does not currently pay for licensed certified

professional midwives or certified lactation counselors. Including these certified professionals in Medicaid reimbursement can provide both pre and post-care that often increases life expectancy for both the mother and the child. (S478/S479/S690/H5858/H5861)

- 2) **Reproductive Health Care Data Privacy:** Prevents insurers and health care providers from sharing reproductive health data with out-of-state providers at patient request. (H5857/S691)
- 3) **Comply with the national Ratio of School-Based Social Workers** to 1:250 students (currently 1:685) to help mitigate youth mental health crisis. ([S250](#))
- 4) **Expand insurance coverage of fertility treatments** to include LGBTQ+ and single individuals. (H5629/[S691](#))
- 5) **Expand pharmacists' prescribing of birth control** to remove 3-month supply limit. (H6038)
- 6) **Individual Marketplace Affordability Act** to help reduce out-of-pocket costs for low- and moderate-income consumers enrolled in health insurance coverage through the Rhode Island health benefits exchange. (S0707)
- 7) **No cost birth control** ([S268](#)/H6047)

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

SAME DAY VOTER REGISTRATION: Twenty-three states and Washington, D.C., have implemented same-day registration, which allows any qualified resident of the state to register to vote and cast a ballot at the same time. Twenty of those states and Washington, D.C., offer Election Day registration, which means voters can both register and vote on Election Day, often during the early voting period. ([H5515](#))

ADDITIONAL

- Expand the use of **Equity Impact Statements** in budget and legislative proposals ([H5010](#))
- Expand the supply of **safe, healthy, and affordable homes**
- Allocate \$30M in state funds to support the **V.I.C.T.I.M. Act** to fund victim service programs, saving taxpayers money by preventing future violence and reducing the burden on emergency services ([H5390](#))
- Nonprofit financial reporting requirements for organizations with budgets under \$1M can meet the requirements via 990 or other approved financial reports, thereby reducing the financial burden of the current required audit. ([H5562](#)/[S783](#))
- Against a bill requiring nonprofits seeking state funding to publicize the salaries of their top ten paid staff. (H5454/S579)