



TESTIMONY OF GLBTQ LEGAL ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS
In Support of H8245
An Act Relating To Insurance -- Accident And Sickness Insurance Policies
House Health and Human Services Committee
March 30, 2026

Dear Chair Donovan, Vice Chair Giraldo, Second Vice Chair Potter and distinguished members of the House Health & Human Services Committee:

My name is Elizabeth Rodriguez-Ross, and I am a Staff Attorney at GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD Law). I write to express strong support for House Bill 8245, An Act Relating To Insurance -- Accident And Sickness Insurance Policies. This legislation is an important step towards preserving access to medically necessary healthcare by ensuring coverage for supplies of hormone prescriptions for up to twelve months.

As you know, GLAD Law is New England's leading legal rights organization dedicated to ensuring equality for LGBTQ people and people living with HIV. At GLAD Law, we are deeply committed to the ability of community members to access necessary healthcare safely. We have helped draft and pass provider shield laws throughout New England, including in Rhode Island, and we have challenged unconstitutional bans of transgender health care.

The federal landscape has made access to transgender medical care increasingly uncertain for patients and providers alike. Executive orders, proposed regulatory changes and politically motivated enforcement actions have created a climate in which patients cannot assume that their current access to care will continue uninterrupted. This is not a luxury but a practical safeguard against disruptions.

In this increasingly turbulent landscape in which medically necessary healthcare is under attack, Rhode Island has a critical role to play in ensuring continuity of treatment for its residents who rely on hormone medications. While prescriptions may permit patients to pick up many months of refills at once, many insurers only cover the cost of the medication if patients pick up their refills more slowly over time. To obtain a medication supply that will last for a longer period, patients often need to pay out-of-pocket. For many patients and their families, this is financially burdensome or simply not possible.

This legislation would ensure that patients have a stop-gap option for continuity of treatment, in the event of an interruption to their access to medically necessary medications. It would not require insurers to cover new or different medications than they do now, it would not limit the discretion of providers to prescribe medications in the amount they deem medically warranted, and it explicitly provides for compliance with applicable controlled substance laws.

Adopting this bill would build on Rhode Island's leadership in protecting access to essential healthcare. It would also follow the example set by Washington state in passing similar language into law last year with bipartisan support.¹

With coordinated political efforts seeking to prevent access to medically necessary care, no patient should have to choose between their health and their financial stability. GLAD Law urges this Committee to remove that calculus. Please do not hesitate to contact GLAD Law to provide further information and support. Thank you for your work.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ERoss', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Elizabeth Rodriguez-Ross
Staff Attorney
GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders
erodriguezross@gladlaw.org
(617) 778-6961

¹ 2025 Wash. Sess. Laws Ch. 171.