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ACLU OF RI POSITION: SUPPORT

**TESTIMONY ON 22 – H 7484,
AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT – HEALTH CARE
FOR CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN
March 3, 2022**

The ACLU of RI supports this legislation which would ensure that all residents under the age of 19 – regardless of immigration status – would qualify for comprehensive health care through the state’s RItE Track program.

Though it has always been the case, the last two years in particular have emphasized the importance of accessibility to public health services for all individuals residing in Rhode Island. Unfortunately, children who are undocumented currently have very limited access to health insurance and coverage for preventative care services, emergency services, or specialist care, and their families may feel uneasy seeking medical treatment for fear that their immigration status may be exposed. This legislation would not only guarantee equity in accessibility for child health coverage, but it would importantly assuage those anxieties that families may have in accessing treatment services due to their immigration status.

Because this legislation would provide for important health supports for all children, and because it would guarantee that children are not limited in their health coverage access simply due to their immigration status, we strongly urge passage of this critical policy. Thank you for your consideration.

Submitted by: Hannah Stern, Policy Associate