

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** Ciarlo, Lorna <LCiarlo@sevenhills.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 3:02 PM  
**To:** House Health and Human Services Committee  
**Subject:** ABA Bill H5253

Attached as a word document and letter pasted below



[ABA bill.docx](#)



**Attention:**

Chairwoman Donovan  
and Committee members

March 18, 2025

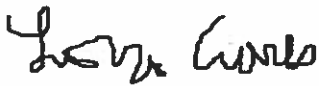
Dear Chairwoman Donovan and Committee members I want to thank you for considering the bill #ABA Bill H5253. I am writing on behalf of Seven Hills an organization which services all of Rhode Island. I have served as a behavioral therapist in every area of Rhode Island for over half a decade now. As a former ABA therapist, I can testify to the benefits of this service. These children receiving ABA are often being seen on day one having no form of functional communication to their caregivers. They are not able to advocate for their own basic wants and needs. ABA single handedly is a means to give these children a voice. While some may see a child throwing a tantrum or a behavioral child disrupting the classroom many times the issue at hand is the inability to communicate their emotions or needs. With the help of ABA they are able to replace those maladaptive behaviors and learn to rather communicate effectively instead. ABA is a way that even individuals who may not have verbal communication can learn to adapt and thrive in this world. It allows children to communicate with their caregivers before they may first learn to speak using Sign Language. It is able to put augmented communication such as ipads in the hands of these individuals giving them a way for their voice to finally be heard. The truth is ABA is the way these skills are taught to these individuals and families. Without ABA they would not have the resources to apply themselves to the world around them.

While this primarily has spoken to the benefit ABA serves towards the area of communication there are so many benefits to the principals of ABA in learning. It provides a more manageable way for individuals to be able to acquire knowledge, breaks down necessarily skills for teaching. It allows a simpler way to learn and give them insight to their differences and needs. Through ABA I have helped students learn some of the most basic necessary skills such as showering or caring for their own body. I have been able to teach kids about educational topics when they may not have been able to in more conventional ways. I have been able to help children who would refuse to eat anything but a cheerio try new foods. It has had children go from a fear of being in school to loving school because they are now heard and understood.

Now as for the families. The amount of peace and understanding I have witnessed ABA bring to families is truly a testament itself to the service. When an ABA therapist walks in that door they are faced with parents who are feeling scared, helpless, and hopeless. ABA is what gives these families the understanding and knowledge to best support their child. I have seen a siblings learn to understand and be now able to communicate with their younger brother when they never could before.

I strongly urge you to consider supporting this bill. Commercial insurance companies need to not be capping the amount able to be paid. Furthermore ABA can not be capped at an age of 15. Developmentally many individuals who utilize ABA services do not reach maturity nor are considered an adult until the age of 22. This leaves 7 years that the individuals will not be able to have access to the care they need. In many cases this is actually the time period that ABA may be helping them form work skills to be able to function as a job. These skills that they learn to ABA are used throughout the rest of their lives. It leads to a better quality of life for them. Moreover it helps connect them to their community in ways that they never would have been able to. This is a need in this and all states. Without this bill a huge level of support would be taken away from the individuals who need it. They would not be able to have the appropriate resources needed to learn and adapt to the world as they now can through these services. We need ABA, I can only hope everything possible is done to support this bill.

Sincerely,  [ABA bill.docx](#)



Lorna Ciarlo

**Lorna Ciarlo**

*Service Coordinator II, Early Intervention  
Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates  
401-309-3466*

[lciarlo@sevenhills.org](mailto:lciarlo@sevenhills.org)



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