

**H5082: Oppose as written**

3/25/2025

Dear Chairperson Donovan and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

Thank you for your service to Rhode Island.

My name is Joshua M Smith MD. I am a physiatrist working here in RI.

As a physician specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, I have the unique vantage point of working with rehabilitation providers from Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech and Language Pathology/Audiology on a daily basis.

This offers the opportunity to regularly see the important and dedicated care that they provide and the way they all positively impact people's lives. Each profession is unique in its approach and scope of practice but equally important to the health and wellbeing of my clients.

It is my understanding that historically all three Rehabilitation professions have been addressed in the same manner by insurance carrier policies and procedures including copays, coinsurance and deductibles.

It is also my understanding that House bill H5082 would alter that pattern by lowering copays to no more than those of a physician or osteopath but only for one profession.

This is inconsistent with the teamwork model prominent in Rehabilitation and does not reflect the equal value and necessity of these parallel health professions.

Improving access to rehabilitation services is an important goal and one which I support. There is no question that rising copays, coinsurance and deductibles are compromising that access and need to be addressed. However, it is critical that Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Speech Therapy are all treated the same in this regard.

Please revise S0051 to include all 3 Rehabilitation Therapies.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua M Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joshua M Smith MD

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