

Steven Sepe

From: Kim Gilbert <kim3155@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2025 6:13 AM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee
Subject: H5082

Opposed to bill as currently written

Would Support if Amended to also include Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy

March 27, 2025

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

Thank you for your service.

I have been an occupational therapist for 47 years and have worked in many practice areas including hospital, skilled nursing and rehabilitation, home care and currently working in the school setting.

I am writing to respectfully request consideration of a change in language for H5082. Please consider the addition of Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy to **H5082**. This bill limits copays, coinsurance or office deductibles for services of a physical therapist to the amount authorized for the services of a primary care physician or osteopath on or after January 1, 2026. Kudos to APTA RI for working to decrease the burden of co-pays for clients. **Without language revision I stand in opposition.**

A tiered hierarchy of charges suggests differing values for each therapy. If one profession's copays are at a lower rate than the others, there may be an incentive for clients to seek treatment from one service but not the others. Many conditions, including CVA, traumatic head injury, Parkinson's Disease and cerebral palsy require access to all three rehabilitation professions (occupational, speech and physical therapy) to allow individuals to achieve their maximum potential.

Clients and their families working through illness or injury should not be forced to make choices between participation in therapies and household bills. Please consider amending the language in this bill, as requested, to decrease visit co-pays for occupational, speech and physical therapies. Passage of an amended therapy co-pay bill would be taking a major step in providing Rhode Islanders more affordable access to Rehabilitation Services.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
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