



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Human Services Committee  
Public Hearing Testimony  
Thursday, February 22, 2007

**RANKING MEMBER**  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Dear Senator Harris, Senator Kissel, Senator Coleman, Representative Villano, Representative Gibbons, Representative Abercrombie and Human Services Committee Membership:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on House Bill 5388, *AN ACT CONCERNING COVERAGE UNDER THE KATIE BECKETT WAIVER PROGRAM FOR SERVICES PROVIDED BY A PHYSICAL THERAPIST INTERN*. This legislation is designed to expand the Katie Beckett waiver program to include services provided by a physical therapy intern who is under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

The Katie Beckett Waiver Program has been a godsend for many families affected by severe disability. Under this program, disabled children and adults can qualify for Medicaid dollars to pay for at home care without the assets and incomes of family members being a factor. This program has prevented many family members from devoting most—or in some cases all—of their financial resources to cover the costs of their loved ones care.

There are however, several drawbacks to this Program. Currently, only licensed physical therapists and their licensed assistances can treat patients. This has led to an acute shortage of caregivers that qualify and has diminished that care that is offered. To rectify this problem, I have proposed that interns pursuing a course of study in physical therapy should be covered under this program. Many interns in the field of physical therapy meet the standards necessary to treat the severely disabled and I would add that any treatment performed by these interns would be under intense supervision. Passage of this legislation will enable many more patients to receive the care and attention they need while providing the additional benefit of on the job training for aspiring physical therapists.

The Katie Beckett Waiver Program was instituted to enhance the lives of the disabled and to keep families together. It has done a good job so far, but more needs to be done. I ask that this Committee please vote favorably on this bill and increase the options available to families.