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Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Regarding: Raised Bill No. 5249  
**AN ACT CONCERNING COPAYMENTS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES.**

Dear Co-Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee:

My name is Dawn Lesinski and my husband and I have owned a small business in Hebron Connecticut for eighteen years. I am requesting that you pass Raised Bill No. 5249 which would be an extension of last year's Public Act No. 13-307 (House Bill 6546), which similarly limited the co-payments for physical therapy services.

When I saw the information regarding this bill, I took a moment to pull out my son's OT evaluation from 2007. He was three years old at the time. I did not know what Occupational Therapy was then, and only brought him there upon the recommendation of a friend. My son was struggling in so many ways, and I was at the end of my rope.

**Here are his challenges listed by the OT in 2007.**

\*Difficulty with sensitivity to touch information (poor touch modulation)

\*Difficulty with sensitivity and filtering of auditory information

\*Poor discrimination of movement (vestibular) and proprioceptive information impacting:

Body awareness

Gross motor and fine motor skills

Postural endurance

Bilateral coordination skills

Attention and ability to remain still for short periods of time

Below average visual-motor integration skills

Below average motor coordination

Below average visual perceptual skills

My son received approximately one year of weekly OT. We paid a \$30 copay per visit. Over the course of the year we paid about \$1,500. As a middle class family with a young child and a new baby that was manageable, but we would not have been able to afford much more.

So how is our son today?

Outstanding. He is an exceptional student in the fourth grade; he is one of the top ten in his class and as such receives additional instruction for gifted students. This year he received "Sportsman of the Year" on his soccer team, and the coach is encouraging him to try out for a higher-level team. He is close to testing for his second-degree black belt in Taekwondo. He reads music and plays drums. But most importantly he is well adjusted and fun to be around. Kids like him, teachers like him, WE like him! Both my husband and I feel strongly that Occupational Therapy changed not only our son's life but all of our lives for the better. We believe because of OT he has the opportunity to reach his potential, and to enjoy his childhood, and we have the opportunity to enjoy parenting him.

I believe that \$30 should be the maximum copay for OT. This is an amount that most families would be able to pay, and I think it is fair. Anything higher and the burden of payment could be enough to turn families like mine away from OT. One year of OT was life changing for my son, without it he would likely be costing the insurance company and the public school a tremendous amount over the long term.

It is my hope that all children who need OT services to thrive are able to receive them, and this bill is one way to assure that.

I am asking that you please support legislation limiting copays for Occupational Therapy. Thank you for your time. I am available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

*Dawn M. Lesinski*

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