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

Regarding: Bill No. 5249 – Co-Payment for Occupational Therapy Services

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

I have been an occupational therapy practitioner working in Connecticut for 16 years and will receive my Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy in May. Please pass Raised Bill No. 5249 that 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.

Disparity of co-pay fees for occupational and physical therapies would render them unequally accessible. A patient's need for specific therapeutic disciplines varies greatly. They are neither interchangeable with the other, nor will the outcomes be efficacious when one discipline is substituted for the other based on cost of co-pay. The long-term outcome of this dynamic will result in poorer outcomes and *greater cost of services* in the future.

My husband experienced a ruptured aneurysm that required 12 months of occupational and speech therapy. He did not required extended physical therapy. This event was financially crippling to our family. Hefty co-pays would have plunged us deeply in debt or rendered therapy inaccessible—further devastating the lives of our three growing sons, along with the ripple affect on them and their future families. Reasonable access to occupational therapy enabled my husband to return to *productive, full-time employment*.

Please support this legislation to ensure reasonable availability of occupational therapy to restore individuals to the highest level of independence. This intervention will reduce more costly future services.

Thank you for your time. I am available to answer any questions you might have. Further, I am willing to expand on our experience of having been denied services and negotiating for approval of therapy.

Sincerely,

Donna Hoover, COTA, OTS

cc: D. Peligri, K. Vilonen

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