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21 Wood Pond Road
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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 Kari Buck, and I am an inpatient occupational therapist at Gaylord Specialty Healthcare in Wallingford, CT. My area of specialty is neurological rehabilitation, and I work with patients who have survived strokes, traumatic brain injuries, and spinal cord injuries. I strongly request the passing of 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.

As an inpatient therapist, I see the undeniable value of the continuum of care. Patients often transition from the inpatient setting to an outpatient setting for continued therapy. The current copay situation is very limiting and does not allow patients to reach their full functional potential. I can think of many examples, but one replays in my mind often. I worked for months with a twenty year old female who suffered a spinal cord injury and now lives with quadriplegia. She has minimal function of her arms and hands. After transitioning to outpatient rehabilitation, she was extremely limited as to the amount of occupational therapy her family could afford. To this day, she is unable to sufficiently feed herself or use her computer to return to school or connect with friends or, which are tasks she would have been able to do if the co-payments for skilled occupational therapy were limited.

This is merely one example that stands out among the rest, but the numbers of patients whose lives are impacted by the high co-payments are countless.

Again, I thank you for your time and consideration. I am available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Kari Buck

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