

David Mahler, CPO, CEO
New England O&P Systems

Parody case ATTN SB 376

Thank you **Madam or Mister** Chair,

My name is David Mahler, I live in Westport CT

I am the CEO of New England Orthotic and Prosthetic Systems. The company is based out of Branford CT and has 28 patient care locations through out CT, MA, RI, NY, LI.

I am speaking to you from a business perspective and how the policies that the insurance companies are implementing are effecting the individuals we are working with.

Our ultimate goal as a prosthetist and a business is to restore independence to an individual that has come to deal with major tragedy in their life with the loss of a limb. It is our goal to help them with the right prosthetic devices to restore their independence and functionality. So they can once again feel whole again.

Our federal agencies have set the reasonable fee schedule for these devices. Understanding that a prosthetist/orthoptist are only paid for the device that we provide.

So when this price was established it includes evaluation, casting, measuring, fitting, fabricating, delivery, training, and maintenance for the life time of a prosthesis. Most prosthesis will last for 3 to 5 years.

Medicare fee schedule is our standard for reimbursement while all the private insurers are discounted off that fee schedule. Most insurances have come to the table with the attitude that if you want our contract here is your rate. There is no negotiations.

What this means is that the level of care we want to provide is being limited to that which the insurance companies are dictating.

I give you one recent example.

26 year old woman had a traumatic amputation above the knee. Prior to the amputation she was an active individual and a student. The better choice of a prosthesis is covered under the normal fee schedule of the federal government. Her insurance reimbursement rate was less than cost of the componentry of the better choice of prosthesis. She being a student and limited funds we had to provide her a prosthesis with less functionality and limiting her abilities.

As CEO of a business and as a prosthetist for 19 years I have never wanted to not give someone the prosthesis that fits there life style and allow them to get back to whatever functional level they want.

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It is disheartening to know that we have to provide less to keep the doors open. We as businesses are not asking for more than what was established by our federal government agencies.

What we are asking for is equality care for all individuals suffering from the loss of a limb.

Thank you