

Chris O'Brien

From: Joanna Valentini <jvalentini@cox.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 12:00 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: HB 7591 and SB 2553

My name is Joanna Valentini, proud mom of Lauren age 21 that was diagnosed with Angelman's Syndrome before the of age 2. I am writing to you in support of HB 7591 and SB 2553.

Support of HB 7591 and SB 2553 funds much needed services for our most vulnerable Rhode Island residents including people with disabilities, seniors, children, families and so many others. It funds the rate reform legislation that was already passed in 2022 as intended. We need to make good on the promise already made and passed.

As a mom I have spent many years advocating to make Lauren's life happy and fulfilling - just like all parents want for their children. We have had to fight to get services and qualified staff more times than I care to recall. Over the course of many years, I have watched funding levels and therefore services (as hiring has become more and more difficult) continuously decline in quality. Now is the time to start making things right for Rhode Islanders in need. Funding is at the core to begin the process to right the ship. Not committing to the promise already made just continues to make an already big problem even worse.

The many years of inconsistent services has been detrimental to Lauren especially and our family. With 2 other daughters (one older and one younger than Lauren) we have had to make many difficult decisions about our family around caring for Lauren. It has and continues to be an emotional drain on our family. We have been unable to participate in events as a family - instead we have had to decide which parent will attend. That has been difficult beyond what can be put in word. Family vacations are nearly impossible and the few we have been able to have are very stressful needing detail planning. Most of the time one of us has had to opt out to care for Lauren.

Funding these bills will provide for much needed assistance increasing Lauren's quality of life! It will enable her to live a happy and fulfilling life engaging in activities that will provide purpose for her in life!

Funding will bring much needed resources and staffing that is vital to the continued development of persons and programs that will enable the recipients to live the lives they desire. Inadequate funding continues to kick the can down the road - programs and services not provided due to funding restraints impacts the development of much needed support and skills for persons in need.

Respectively,

To the honorable House Committee on Finance,

Please support House Bill 7033 to include chiropractic services for Medicaid recipients in Rhode Island. In a time when the need for pain management alternatives to opioid medication and expensive often unnecessary procedures, the time to evolve our healthcare system in Rhode Island is now!

As a practicing chiropractor in Rhode Island, I routinely inform Medicaid patients in need of a non-opioid pain management option that they will need to pay out of pocket. These patients cannot afford the care and turn to other means of reducing pain, including opioids and riskier, more invasive treatments that increase cost to the Rhode Island taxpayer. Budgeting for chiropractic services in Rhode Island's Medicaid budget will open the door for more approaches to pain management to over 80,000 Rhode Islanders that would otherwise not be able to afford it and provide an avenue away from the use of opioids and more invasive, expensive options for management of chronic pain. Frankly, this legislation will prevent opioid use, prevent unnecessary procedures and potentially save lives.

Please help Medicaid recipients in Rhode Island access nonopioid pain relief options. Please provide access to safe, effective and cost-efficient pain management options for Rhode Islanders. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael T. Macijeski, DC
Dunns Corners Chiropractic Center
259 Post Road
Westerly, RI 02891