

March 18, 2025

RE: House Bill: H5253

Dear Chairwoman Donovan and Committee Members:

I am writing in support of **ABA Bill H5253**. I work for Seven Hills Rhode Island, a nonprofit organization that, among other services, provides ABA to many children across the state. Thank you for your previous support in increasing Medicaid reimbursement for ABA. It is now time to ensure that commercial insurers maintain the same rates in order to provide stability across the system.

ABA providers are tasked with supporting children as they learn the skills they need to be successful at home, school and the community. These critical services are intensive and are considered to be one of most effective evidence-based practices used to support children with autism. While my work in EI does not always include ABA, many of the families we see leave EI just after receiving an autism diagnosis and wondering what they can do to help their child learn. They find what they need in ABA, a program designed to help children learn how to navigate their day, engage with family, or make a friend.

Every child with an autism diagnosis deserves access to ABA services at a level that meets their individual needs. Families should not have limited access based on the insurance they carry. All RI insurances should reimburse this service at the same rate, that which aligns with Medicaid reimbursement.

Similarly, decisions about dosage should be made as part of each individual child's plan. Capping services based on number of visits or age, without regard for the needs of the child or ongoing progress, is unfair and potentially, limits access to the services that may be providing the most meaningful supports.

I respectfully ask your support for Bill H5253.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laurie Farrell

EI Director, Seven Hills Rhode Island