



COUNCIL TO PREVENT

**OPIOID
DEPENDENCE**

Testimony of Josh Rosenthal, Chair, Council to Prevent Opioid Dependence (CTPOD) In Favor of S3022

Chair Murray, members of the Health Committee, I'm Josh Rosenthal, Chair of the Council to Prevent Opioid Dependence, an organization dedicated to preventing opioid dependence and addiction in Rhode Island. I'm submitting written testimony in favor of S3022.

Let me begin by thanking Senator Bissaillon for introducing and Chair Murray for cosponsoring this legislation requiring parity to ensure robust insurance coverage for safe and effective non-opioid pain treatment. I lost my son Nathan to a fentanyl overdose. I am dedicated to making sure other families don't have to go through what my family went through. That is why we must re-double our efforts to stop people from going down the road that leads to dependence and addiction—a road that often begins with an opioid pain reliever prescription. It is essential that Rhode Islanders have access to affordable and evidenced-based non-opioid pain treatment.

That is exactly what S3022 will do. It will level the playing field, requiring insurance companies to cover the non-opioid prescription pain relievers coming on the market in the same way they cover opioid pain relievers as well as ensure robust coverage for other nonopioid pain treatment, such as physical therapy.

While it is important that all who need it have access to quality treatment, it is far better to prevent dependence and addiction in the first place. I urge you to support S3022, legislation that will prevent ruined lives and senseless deaths.