



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION
TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS



March 16, 2016

The Honorable Joshua B. Miller
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairman Miller:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons (RISOPS) are writing in support of S 2697, and to request amendments. This bill establishes the Rhode Island Behavioral Health Care Reform Act of 2016 which promotes the delivery of behavioral health care services, and provides for increased insurance coverage for such services. While the bill recognizes the Rhode Island Medical Society, it fails to include the equivalent professional organization representing osteopathic physicians (DOs), the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons. The AOA and RISOPS request that this bill be amended to provide equal recognition for RISOPS.

The AOA represents more than 123,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs, is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools, and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other health care facilities. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. RISOPS is a professional organization that represents over 300 DOs providing patient care in Rhode Island.

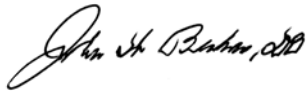
The AOA and RISOPS would like to request that the bill be amended as follows:

- Section 23-17.12-9 "(d) The requirement that each review agent shall utilize and provide upon request, by Rhode Island licensed hospitals and the Rhode Island Medical Society, **the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons**, the Rhode Island Psychiatric Society..."
- Section 42-14.5-3 "(a)... Notice of not less than ten (10) days of said hearing(s) shall go to the general assembly, the governor, the Rhode Island Medical Society, **the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons**, the Hospital Association..."
- Section 42-14.5-3 "(h)... The workgroup shall also include at least one designee each from the Rhode Island Medical Society, **the Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons**, Rhode Island Council..."

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The AOA and RISOPS support payment incentives, including increased insurance coverage, to ensure an adequate supply of behavioral health care providers for Rhode Island patients. **The AOA and RISOPS thank you for your leadership on this issue by introducing S 2697, and appreciate your consideration of our request to provide equal recognition for RISOPS.** Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nicholas Schilligo, MS, Associate Vice President, State Government Affairs, at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,



John Becher, DO
President, AOA



James F. Griffin, DO
President, RISOPS

CC: Boyd R. Buser, DO, AOA President-elect
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