

March 27, 2019

Senate Committee on Health Care
The Honorable Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair

RE: Support for Bill 887

Chair Monnes Anderson & Members of the Senate Committee on Healthcare,

I am writing to urgently ask for your support of Senate Bill 887. I have been a proponent of acupuncture for over 16 years after it was the only thing that was able to end a chronic case of sciatica (extremely painful nerve issue) and unending nausea and vomiting that I suffered from for months during my first pregnancy. Nothing else gave me relief or allowed me to walk pain free and keep food down and actually begin to gain the weight needed for a healthy birth. After experiencing such success, I began to do my own research and learn about acupuncture. Since, I have recommended its use and seen many family members and friends use acupuncture to relieve and heal a vast number of issues including migraines, back spasms, hip issues and also lessen or end their use of prescription painkillers.

I have an insurance plan that offers an acupuncture benefit, as do both of my children. I love this and was excited to be able to get the healthcare of my choice for my family. Unfortunately, with the prior authorization process, it hampers my ability to use these treatments in a timely fashion to address issues in real time. As a single parent, I can't afford to go to these services and pay in full (hence my insurance!). But if my provider has to submit and require approval, not only does it take time to have mine and my son's needs met, it also costs me two copays/coinsurance as they can't treat fully on first visit- only evaluate. Then I have to reschedule, take kids out of school, take time off work, etc., and it makes it quite difficult to get our needs met while an issue is occurring. It feels a bit like false advertising...yes, you can use acupuncture! But actually, no you can't unless we authorize and decide for you what you need. It's a bit preposterous to think someone in an office that I've never met can decide more clearly than my doctor and acupuncturist what my current needs are.

Currently, I am working with a chronic condition that is painful daily. Acupuncture and herbs help me manage this condition. I could also daily take opioids and OTC anti-inflammatories which I did previously and has caused strain on my liver. My current health regimen can be done safely and effectively without causing additional harm to my liver or possible dependency on pain killers. This is the healthy lifestyle that I choose. And yet, I can't continue this program with consistency as my provider is constantly having to approve one visit, or three visits. I need consistency in my care!

When one of my sons has an issue, they need to receive care that I can afford and I know is being paid for. That's why I have insurance.

SB 887 would help ensure that families like mine can use their benefits and not feel like they are being taken advantage of by the care system. This allows us to receive the care we need up front without debilitating timelines. It would allow for an initial visit and 6 treatments before requiring authorization. Allowing the professionals to do their jobs and help patients in real time! If additional treatment is needed, then prior authorizations can be factored in.

This bill would keep my family healthier and cost less in the long run since treatments would happen from the beginning.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Lee
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