



Feb 2022 Suggested remarks regarding prior authorization legislation.

"Thank you Chairwoman Senator Fields and the committee for this opportunity to testify today.

"I'm \_ and I operate a Medicaid mental health clinic. I'm the advocacy director of COMBINE, which advocates for over 600 independent Medicaid providers." "In March of 2020 a large RAE implemented a prior authorization program, impacting only independent providers and not CMHC Centers, and then the RAE shut down the program in October of 2020. Like many mental healthcare providers, we had a 100% approval rate on hundreds of prior auths"

"We support the concept of allowing providers with high rates of approval some relief from prior authorizations, which take administrative time that is not compensated, and with short durations become duplicative.

"I appreciate Senator Jaquez Lewis mentioning Medicaid. While this bill does not extend these prior authorization protections to Title 25-5 Medicaid, most in our network serve commercially insured clients as well as Medicaid, so this bill's passage will improve our situation. Nevertheless we request that this bill is amended to include Title 25-5 to reduce the growing chasm between commercial and Medicaid regulations."

"We are concerned about the reward for good performance that's described in the bill. Besides an exit from the prior auth program, the bill describes "an incentive reward" and "any other innovative program." Our concern arises from imagining a trivial reward, such as minimal payment, a plaque or a trophy, that would meet the letter of the law as proposed."

"We'd like to remind the committee of HB19-1211, which passed and was signed into law, and offers multiple more prior authorizations guardrails: limits on duration of prior auth time, public criteria, requirements for adjudicators to have appropriate professional licenses, appeal timelines, response timelines, including an 80% approval rate for a prior authorization off-ramp. This law also did not include Medicaid."

"We appreciate that while the approval threshold has been raised from 80% to 95%, the bill uses the word "shall" rather than "may" so we're reassured that high approval rates will be rewarded."

"We thank Chairwoman Senator Fields and the rest of the committee for your time today and I will be available for questions."