

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I live in \_\_\_\_\_. I am writing about a very important issue – improving Alabamians access to health care and treatment. Currently, Alabama has one of the most restrictive statutes when it comes to the practice of physical therapy and patients' access to physical therapists. Only four other states have similar restrictions, meaning that 46 other states better understand the value that physical therapy brings to people and the health care delivery system.

That is why I am contacting you today: to ask you to support legislation that improves health care delivery in Alabama by allowing full direct access to physical therapist services. Currently, physical therapists in Alabama can perform an evaluation, and in some limited cases evaluate and treat patients without a referral. However, in most cases a referral from a doctor, a dentist, licensed chiropractor, a licensed physician's assistant or a licensed certified registered nurse practitioner is required in order to fully access the services of a physical therapist. This imposes on the consumer inconvenience (an extra office visit), additional costs (paying for that visit) and an unnecessary layer of red tape.

Senate Bill 25 and House Bill 50, both of which will be introduced this session, do not expand the scope of services that a physical therapist may perform. The bills only improve patient access to those services. If on an initial evaluation a physical therapist deems the patient is not appropriate for treatment, then no further services will be performed and the patient will be referred to the proper medical professional.

There are many reasons to support this legislation, but three of the primary ones are as follows:

- The bills will allow the consumer to directly access PT services, saving money and time for the consumer.
- Physical therapy services are the most effective alternative -- both physically and financially -- to the use of opioids.
- The bills give Alabama consumers greater control and access over their health care.

Thank you for considering this important legislation that will achieve one of the most important goals of government: improving the lives of everyday people. I hope that you support this endeavor and that I can count on your "yes" vote in 2019.