



## Ensuring Access to Physical Therapy through Fair Compensation

**HB 1655:** (Harris, Stonier)

**SB 6161:** (Cleveland, Rivers, Dhingra, Nobles, Short, Torres)

HB 1655 and SB 6161 require an annual cost-of-living adjustment in reimbursement for contracts between health care providers not employed or affiliated with a hospital and insurance companies. This adjustment is tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Physical Therapists provide care to patients of all ages and abilities, and in a variety of settings. They help people rehabilitate from devastating injuries, manage chronic conditions, avoid surgery and pain medication, and create healthy habits.

The practice of physical therapy is facing serious challenges. :

- In the last four years, PT practices have seen a 42% **increase** in labor and practice costs
- In the last four years ,PT practices have seen a 15% **decrease** in reimbursement
- 33% of PT clinics are operating in the red
- 21% of PTs left the workforce since 2021

Physical therapists and other providers are unable to negotiate their reimbursement contracts with insurers and are stuck with take-it-or-leave-it contracts. If you decline this contract, you are less competitive in the marketplace and can't serve patients in that insurance network.

Insurers use a CMS formula to arbitrarily reduce reimbursement to providers. It is not based on the cost of care. This reduction is hurting our smaller clinics and our rural clinics who are struggling to keep their doors open.

Insurers are opposed to this bill, saying that it will increase health care costs. We disagree. This bill will help decrease costs because patients will have access to high quality, non-opioid physical therapy treatment. This will keep patients from having more expensive procedures in the future.

On average, insurance premiums have increased 24% since 2017, outperforming the consumer price index for the same period.

APTA Washington joins about 15 other provider organizations in support of this bill including the Washington State Chiropractic Association, the Washington State Medical Association, the Washington Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Occupational Therapy Association, the Washington State Dental Association, and others.

**Bill Status: HB 1655 is eligible to be voted out of the House Health Care & Wellness Committee.  
No hearing scheduled yet for SB 6161.**