Talking Points

Reimbursement Adequacy
for Early Intervention Services

I would like to talk to you about adding an 11% increase in Early Intervention reimbursement rates to the state budget.

Early Intervention reimbursement rates as a whole have not been raised since the 1990s. Indeed, rates were cut twice under the previous administration for a total of a 15% reduction. In recent years the rate was restored by 5%. However, that leaves a cut of 10% rather than an adjusted increase over the years.

Therapists and provider agencies have been steadily decreasing their participation in the program because they cannot afford to keep providing the services at the State's payment rates.

Two weeks ago, the Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention released an email in search of new therapists in all of the professions.

The state-wide early intervention coordinating council after reviewing their payment rate methodology has recommended an increase of 11%.

For years, inadequate reimbursement has driven many occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants to either leave or reduce their participation in the early intervention program. In turn, this has led to greater problems in accessing occupational therapy services for children with disabilities or delays in development.

Improved payment rates would address this problem; it would attract more therapists to participate in the program which would go a long way toward helping children get the services they need at a critical time in their development.

Please ask the Assembly/Senate to include an 11% increase in early intervention reimbursement rates in their one-house bills.