*(Month) (Day) (Year)*

The Honorable (First name) (Last name) (Room Number), State Capitol (City), (State), (Zip Code)

*RE:*The ‘Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act’ by Reps. Joe Courtney (CT-02) and Glenn “GT” Thompson (PA-15)

Dear (Assembly Member/Senator) (Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a nationally Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist who resides in your district and I have the utmost respect for all that you do to serve your constituents.

Recently Reps. Joe Courtney (CT-02) and Glenn “GT” Thompson (PA-15) have introduced a new bipartisan bill that would support America’s seniors by preserving expanded access to skilled rehabilitation therapies for Medicare patients, even after the existing Public Health Emergency (PHE) is lifted. The *Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy Act*would ensure that all inpatient rehabilitation hospital patients can continue to benefit from a patient-centered, interdisciplinary care plan even after the end of the PHE.

The approaching problem that this would help address is that when the current PHE waiver comes to an end, Medicare will begin again imposing restrictions on the types of therapies that count towards their “intensity of therapy” requirement, potentially limiting the types of therapies a patient could receive. Under current Medicare rules, a patient must benefit from at least three hours of skilled rehabilitation therapy per day in order to qualify for Medicare coverage of their stay in an inpatient rehab facility. This new legislation would expand the types of therapy that count toward this requirement—such as recreational therapy and respiratory therapy—ensuring that patients can access care that their physicians believe will aid them on the road to recovery.

As a Recreational Therapist getting this bill passed will not only do wonders for our profession as a whole, but it will help create new jobs and businesses serving people with disabling conditions, thus giving them access to the appropriate care that a doctor prescribes. Please vote YES on moving this bill forward.

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

Print your name Street address

City, State, Zip code

# Writing a letter to a legislator

Use the proper salutation, for example:

The Honorable (first name) (last name) Address

City, State, Zip code

Dear (Assembly Member / Senator) (last name) Be courteous and informative in your communication.

State the purpose of the letter in the opening sentence and if you are referring to a bill, include the bill number, author and topic. If you live in the elected official’s district, be sure to say this in the opening paragraph as well.

Focus on the message and key points. Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your family. Keep the letter brief – not more than one page.

Restate your request at the end of the letter, for example urging them to support or oppose the bill. Thank the legislator for his or her support and offer to address any questions that he or she might have. Be sure to include your contact information, and sign the letter.

# Sending e-mail communication to a legislator

The same guidelines apply to e-mail as to written letters. Before sending an e-mail, you might want to call the legislator’s office and ask if a letter sent by e-mail is effective. If you do send an e-mail, send it to the representative. Do not copy other representatives or send a mass e-mail. Make it a brief message with no special layouts or graphics. Do not include attachments.

Include your full name and address so it is clear that you are a constituent, and ask for a response. You might also want to send a hard copy of your e-mail to the legislator.

# Phone calls to a legislator

State your name and address and identify yourself as the legislator’s constituent. You will often be speaking with a secretary or aide. Briefly make known your position as they keep track of the issues that people call about to report to the legislator. Have your thoughts organized in advance, which will help you to keep the call brief and to the point. It is also very helpful to share how the issue affects you personally. Thank them for their support.