

**From:** Phil Prewette  
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As a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, my clients have been very impacted by the lack of parity in the mental health profession for a number of years. There have been times that I have been questioned by insurance companies as to what kind of therapy I am providing and the reason I am providing it. At times, insurance companies even refuse payment or reduce the number of sessions they will cover, which greatly undermines the work we are trying to do with clients. For many clients (especially if they are in crisis), taking the steps needed to seek therapy is very difficult and daunting in the first place, and when insurance companies try to mandate therapeutic modalities, number of sessions, etc., it adversely affects the clients and adds to the emotional distress of the client in need. For example, just over one year ago, I had a client going through a very contentious and emotionally distressing divorce. After meeting for a few months, the insurance company began refusing payment to me because my client was not "homicidal or suicidal" even though the situation deleteriously affected his work and relationships. As a result of the constant frustrations and unprofessional interference by insurance companies, I have seen many professionals terminate insurance contracts because of poor reimbursements. This has greatly limited clients' options, and I have even seen good people leave the profession entirely because of lack of parity and grossly inadequate reimbursements. This bill is long overdue and I hope that you will finally give us the mental health parity that is necessary for the well-being of the people in this state.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

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