

# SENATE . . . . . No. 1656

---

---

## *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

---

SENATE, MAY 2, 1988.

The committee on Health Care, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 622) of Edward L. Burke for legislation to provide that certain health care policies cover payment for costs arising from speech and language disorders; and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3127) of Sherwood Guernsey for legislation to require certain health care policies to cover payment for costs arising from speech and language disorders, reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 1656).

For the committee,

EDWARD L. BURKE.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Eight.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT CERTAIN HEALTH CARE PLANS AND POLICIES SHALL COVER PAYMENT FOR COSTS ARISING FROM SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DISORDERS.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 175 of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after Section 47G the following section:  
3 Section 47H: Any blanket or general policy of insurance  
4 described in subdivision (A), (C), or (D) of section one hundred  
5 and ten, including that which provides for dependent coverage,  
6 and which is delivered or issued for delivery or subsequently  
7 renewed by agreement between the insurer and the policyholder  
8 in the Commonwealth, or any employees' health and welfare fund  
9 which provides hospital expense benefits, including that which  
10 provides for dependent coverage, and which is issued or renewed  
11 to any person or group of persons in the Commonwealth during  
12 the period that this provision is effective, and which provides  
13 benefits for expenses of residents of the Commonwealth covered  
14 under any such policy or plan arising from speech, language and  
15 hearing disorders as described in the licensing provisions for  
16 speech-language pathologists and audiologists in Chapter 112,  
17 Sections 138, et seq., of the General Laws, shall not be limited  
18 to benefits covering diagnostic and treatment services rendered  
19 by speech-language pathologists or audiologists at a specified  
20 setting but shall include coverage for diagnostic and treatment  
21 services rendered by speech-language pathologists or audiologists  
22 in any setting including, but not limited to, a private office where  
23 a speech-language pathologist or audiologist is authorized to  
24 practice. The terms and conditions of or limitations on the  
25 provision of benefits under this Section shall not be greater than  
26 the terms and conditions of or limitations on the provision of  
27 benefits for physical illnesses generally.

1 SECTION 2. Chapter 176A of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after Section 8J the following section:

3 Section 8K. Any contract, including that which provides for  
4 dependent coverage, between a subscriber and the corporation  
5 under an individual or group hospital service plan which shall be  
6 delivered or issued for delivery or subsequently renewed in this  
7 Commonwealth and which provides benefits for expenses of  
8 residents of the Commonwealth covered under any such contract  
9 arising from speech, language and hearing disorders as described  
10 in the licensing provisions of speech-language pathologists and  
11 audiologists in Chapter 112, Section 138, et seq., of the General  
12 Laws, shall not be limited to benefits covering diagnostic and  
13 treatment services rendered by speech-language pathologists or  
14 audiologists at a specified setting, but shall include coverage for  
15 diagnostic and treatment services rendered by speech-language  
16 pathologists or audiologists in any setting including, but not  
17 limited to, a private office where a speech-language pathologist  
18 or audiologist is authorized to practice. The terms and conditions  
19 of or limitations on the provision of benefits under this Section  
20 shall not be greater than the terms and conditions of or limitations  
21 on the provision of benefits for physical illnesses generally.

1 SECTION 3. Chapter 176B of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after Section 4J the following section:

3 Section 4K. Any subscription certificate under an individual or  
4 group medical service agreement, including that which provides  
5 for dependent coverage, and which is delivered or issued for  
6 delivery or subsequently renewed in this Commonwealth, and  
7 which provides benefits for expenses of residents of the  
8 Commonwealth covered under any such subscription certificate  
9 arising from speech, language and hearing disorders as described  
10 in the licensing provisions for speech-language pathologists and  
11 audiologists in Chapter 112, Sections 138, et seq., in the General  
12 Laws, shall not be limited to benefits covering diagnostic and  
13 treatment services rendered by speech-language pathologists or  
14 audiologists at a specified setting, but shall include coverage for  
15 diagnostic and treatment services rendered by speech-language  
16 pathologists and audiologists in any setting including, but not

17 limited to, a private office where a speech-language pathologist  
18 or audiologist is authorized to practice. The terms and conditions  
19 of or limitations on the provision of benefits under this Section  
20 shall not be greater than the terms and conditions of or limitations  
21 on the provision of benefits for physical illnesses generally.

1 SECTION 4. Chapter 176G of the General Laws is hereby  
2 amended by inserting after Section 4D the following section:

3 Section 4E. Any group health maintenance contract or health  
4 maintenance contract, including that which provides for  
5 dependent coverage, and which provides benefits for expenses of  
6 residents of the Commonwealth covered under any such contract  
7 arising from speech, language and hearing disorders as described  
8 in the licensing provisions for speech-language pathologists and  
9 audiologists in Chapter 112, Sections 138 et seq., of the General  
10 Laws, shall not be limited to benefits covering diagnostic and  
11 treatment services rendered by speech-language pathologists or  
12 audiologists at a specified setting, but shall include coverage for  
13 diagnostic and treatment services rendered by speech-language  
14 pathologists and audiologists in any setting including, but not  
15 limited to, a private office where a speech-language pathologist  
16 or audiologist is authorized to practice. The terms and conditions  
17 of or limitations on the provision of benefits under this section  
18 shall not be greater than the terms and conditions of or limitations  
19 on the provision of benefits for physical illnesses generally.

1 SECTION 5. The first paragraph of Section 6 of Chapter 118E  
2 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the word  
3 "clinic," in line 13, the words: and that diagnostic and treatment  
4 services rendered by speech-language pathologists or audiologists,  
5 to the extent provided for under said Title XIX, may be so  
6 rendered in any setting, including, but not limited to, a private  
7 office where such speech-language pathologist or audiologist is  
8 authorized to practice.