



North Carolina General Assembly Senate

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SENATOR CHAUDHURI INTRODUCES BILL REQUIRING INSURERS TO COVER ADAPTIVE EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

Would mandate every health benefit plan offered in North Carolina include equipment for those with chronic mobility impairment resulting in lifelong wheelchair use.

RALEIGH – Senator Jay Chaudhuri (D-Wake) introduced legislation on May 27 to mandate that all healthcare plans offered by insurers in the state of North Carolina to individuals with chronic mobility impairment and lifelong wheelchair use include coverage for adaptive exercise equipment. This equipment will be subject to the same copayment, deductible, and provisions as similar durable medical equipment previously covered in such plans.

SB 868 is largely inspired by constituent Ali Ingersoll. Ten years ago, an accident left her paralyzed from the shoulders down and in a wheelchair for the rest of her life. Ingersoll has since been forced to pay thousands of dollars out of pocket for exercise equipment that her doctors and medical professionals view as essential for her health, ability to work and daily wellness.

“After hearing Ali’s story,” said Chaudhuri, “it became apparent to me that individuals with severe disabilities deserve more from their insurance providers. Adaptive exercise equipment is currently considered a non-covered benefit by many plans, when in reality this equipment is a medical necessity.”

Adaptive exercise equipment has been proven to lower the risk of bone fractures, diabetes, and other health issue in individuals with chronic mobility impairment. As they are often unable to go to local gyms, this equipment is one of the few ways such individuals can maintain a healthy level of bone-density, cardiovascular fitness, and muscular tissue.

Ingersoll works ten hours a day, and without the regular use of adaptive exercise equipment she would be unable to sit at her desk for long stretches of time.

“Adaptive exercise equipment does more than just improve Ali’s quality of life,” said Chaudhuri. “This bill will help ensure that people like Ali can afford the technology that allows them to work, stay healthy and stay focused on the important things in their lives.”

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