

Weekly Update During the Legislative Session
Focused on ConnOTA's top advocacy priorities
February 8–14, 2026

 **Advocacy Ask**

ConnOTA is requesting **brief stories or examples** from members illustrating how:

- Licensing costs or an outdated practice act
- Workforce challenges
- Student debt
- Medicaid or reimbursement issues

...affect OT practice, access to care, or sustainability in Connecticut. Your stories strengthen testimony and advocacy at both state and federal levels.

Send your examples to: govaffairs@connota.org

 **Hot Items This Week**

1. Public Hearing on SB 8 – [An Act Supporting Graduate Students in the State](#)

Scheduled for **Tuesday, 2/17/2026 at 12:30 PM**

- ConnOTA encourages members to **submit written or oral testimony**
- Share stories illustrating:
 - **How this bill strengthens Connecticut's healthcare workforce** by retaining occupational therapy practitioners during a time of growing demand.
 - **The impact of federal HR 1 guidance** on students' decisions to pursue professional healthcare degrees and on the broader healthcare workforce pipeline.
 - **Why state support matters** – investing in future professionals ensures safe, high-quality care for all residents and affirms the value of occupational therapy as a vital, professional career path.
- Read the [Governor Lamont Press Release](#)

2. HB 5169 – [Public Health, Violence & Combative Behavior](#)

Committee hearing **Wednesday, 2/12 at noon**. ConnOTA will be submitting written and oral testimony.

- Call for stories (please email Joyce Rioux at jrioux88@gmail.com):
 - **Safety and care impact** – experiences where patient aggression affected therapy sessions or disrupted care.
 - **Workforce challenges** – how aggressive behavior influences OT practitioner retention, student career decisions, or stress in the workplace.
 - **Gaps in reporting or alerts** – situations where prior incidents were unknown and an alert system could have improved safety or care planning.

3. Governor's Budget: Licensure Renewal Fees

Proposed waiver of OT and OTA renewal fees is under consideration.

- ConnOTA has heard that \$5 from our license renewal fee goes to HAVEN haven-ct.org
- We would like to know if anyone is familiar with this program and can provide insight. This information will help with our advocacy efforts.

4. Modernizing the OT Practice Act & OT Licensure Compact

No updates yet on whether the **Public Health Committee** will advance ConnOTA's proposals. Please **keep sending letters and engaging in advocacy**—your efforts make a difference.

- We did receive a letter of support directed to the Public Health Committee from Senator Henri Martin

5. Capitol Tour – February 20, 2026, 11:15-12:15

ConnOTA registration is open to sign up for a tour of the Capitol, observe legislative activity in real time, and leave a note to their legislators showing support for:

- Modernizing the OT Practice Act
- Advancing the OT Licensure Compact

6. CT Medical Assistance Program has released their Provider Bulletin February 2026 Medicaid codes commonly used by OT are being reimbursed at a higher rate.