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## **INDIANA BECOMES 47th STATE TO PROVIDE LICENSURE FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS**

*New Law Will Improve Standards and Guidelines for Consumers Seeking OT Services*

(Bethesda, MD) — Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels signed legislation on May 8 that will provide state licensure for occupational therapists. The new law also will require the development of continuing competence requirements for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

“Occupational therapy practitioners provide important health and rehabilitation services to people of all ages who, because of illness, injury, developmental, or psychological impairment, need specialized intervention to regain, develop, or build skills necessary for independent functioning,” said Christine Mahnesmith, Indiana Occupational Therapy Association (IOTA) President. “This legislation will assure quality for health care consumers by requiring a license to practice occupational therapy.”

IOTA's Legislative Committee spent several months building support for the licensure bill through meetings and discussions with state associations representing other health professions, health care facilities, and consumers. In addition to IOTA's testimony in favor of the legislation, representatives from the Indiana Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association and the Indiana Speech-Language-Hearing Association testified in support of the bill before the House Public Health Committee.

There are more than 118,000 occupational therapy practitioners in the United States. The majority of states require licensure—47 states license occupational therapists and 43 license occupational therapy assistants.

**The American Occupational Therapy Association**, established in 1917, represents more than 35,000 members. AOTA is an active advocate for the profession, and for individuals who can benefit from occupational therapy services.