



April 9, 2018

The Honorable Louis W. Blessing III  
Ohio House of Representatives  
77 S. High St.  
Columbus, OH 43215

CC: Members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee; Representative Thomas West

**Re: HB479 – Discloses Drug Price Information for Patients**

Dear Chairperson Blessing:

On behalf of people affected by epilepsy in the greater Miami Valley area, I would like to encourage the passage of HB479 to allow pharmacies to notify consumers if the retail price of a medication is lower than the co-pay amount and allow for consumers to pay the lower retail amount to pharmacies.

Many people living with epilepsy have multiple health problems and take multiple medications. Even with health insurance and paying a co-pay, these costs can be devastating. Every dollar counts. If an individual pays a \$50 co-pay for medication that has a retail cost of \$11, they may have to decide what they are going to give up to afford their medicine. Often they give up other medications they need to stay in control.

Unfortunately, when a person with epilepsy has seizures, they cannot legally drive, they can have problems holding a job and they often end up on Medicaid and welfare to survive. Staying on a seizure medication can mean they are seizure-free, which is the goal of all epilepsy treatments.

After they are seizure free for a period of time, they are allowed to drive, they can successfully hold a job, attend school and be productive members of society. It is not an exaggeration to say that not being able to afford a single medication can devastate their lives and cost all of us more money.

Other healthcare providers are expected to be transparent in their pricing, listing prices on their websites and answering questions of cost truthfully and in a timely way. The practice of not allowing pharmacies to inform individuals about less expensive ways to purchase medications is in conflict with other efforts to engage and include healthcare consumers in their care and healthcare costs.

HB 479 is a step toward making medications more affordable. Being affordable means people can actually pay for them, take them on schedule and live better lives. It is an excellent step toward making all healthcare more affordable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pamela M. Jacques-Cobb'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Pamela M. Jacques-Cobb, MS, CPW, CHES  
Executive Director