



**Representative Randi Clites**  
75<sup>th</sup> House District

**Sponsor Testimony- House Bill 568**

**House Insurance Committee**  
**May 12, 2020**

Chairman Brinkman, Vice-Chair Antani, Ranking Member Boggs, and the members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 568. This legislation would allow for Ohioans to ensure they have enough of their medications to be safe during a state of emergency.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC has advised people at high risk of complications— a group including people with rare diseases, disabilities, seniors, and those with chronic illnesses – to obtain and keep on hand a supply of prescription medications in the event that staying at home for prolonged periods of time becomes necessary.<sup>1</sup> However, this is infeasible for most Ohioans, since payers rarely cover refills until three to seven days before a prescription is expected to run out and many insurance companies limit the reimbursement to a thirty-day supply.

If this issue is not addressed, many of our state’s residents at greatest risk of critical illness or death from COVID-19 will be forced to choose between traveling to pharmacies despite an active outbreak and abruptly discontinuing maintenance medication. In the event that drug shortages or shipment disruptions occur during an outbreak, some patients may be unable to obtain medication at all. Allowing patients to access up to a 90-day supply of their prescriptions could be life-saving.

The National Organization of Rare Disorders recently surveyed individuals in 49 states about how COVID-19 has impacted their access to medical care and how COVID-19 has impacted them. 69% of the respondents are concerned about access to medication, 18% have been unable to access medication for their disorder due to issues like shortages or their insurance prohibiting more than a thirty-day supply.

We owe it to Ohioans with chronic illnesses to find solutions that will keep them safe and ensure their access to healthcare, especially during a state of emergency. I appreciate the committee’s time and am happy to answer any questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, March 8). People at risk for serious illness from COVID-19. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>.