



Randy Gardner
State Senator

2nd Senate District
Senate Building Room 226
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-466-8060
E-mail: gardner@ohiosenate.gov

SENATOR RANDY GARDNER

Sub S.B. Bill 129 Sponsor Testimony

House Insurance Committee

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Mr. Chairman. Members of the House Insurance Committee. I am pleased to present Substitute Senate Bill 129, the culmination of nine months of work in 2015. Nine months of listening and learning. Nine months of finding common ground on key issues.

Not only is the Prior Authorization Reform Act better for medical providers and patients, but it provides the fundamentals for a more efficient, cost-effective, transparent process for health insurance companies. Indeed, when this bill is implemented, the net result can be lower health care delivery costs for Ohio. That's good for everyone involved – doctors, hospitals, health insurance companies, Ohioans in need of health care and small business employers who want and need health care cost containment through a competitive health insurance market in Ohio. With Sub S.B. 129, that's exactly what they'll have.

Working with my joint sponsor, Senator Cafaro, we tried to provide the most open, collaborative process we could. It may have taken a couple of months longer than we preferred, but today we have a solid compromise. Every section of the bill has been amended. Indeed, almost every page of the bill has changed since introduction last March.

As important and helpful as these reforms can be, not every health plan will experience significant change. In my research on this issue, I spent dozens of hours on the internet – after all, if we are going to have a comprehensive web-based prior authorization system for Ohio, I thought it would be important to know what is *already* on the web.

What I found was encouraging. Some health plans already have policies to respond to prior authorization requests in a matter of a few days. Some plans already operate web-based options for providers. Some plans do a tremendous job of disclosing which medications and services need prior approval, and they provide detailed instructions about how to access health insurance on their websites.

I would like to thank all of the interested parties for striving to work together on this bill, but especially to the dozens and dozens of prominent organizations that have endorsed this legislation – to date more than 60 organizations and the list continues to grow. The Ohio State Medical Association. The Ohio Hospital Association. Children's Hospitals. Groups representing optometrists, chiropractors, drug addiction organizations, the National Alliance for Mental Health of Ohio, the Cleveland Clinic, First Dayton Cancer Care, and many others.

Today I am asking members of this committee to join these organizations in saying *Yes* to Sub. SB 129.

