



Proponent Testimony, SB 129

Chair Sears, and members of the House Insurance Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony today on SB 129, the Prior Authorization Bill. My name is Mike D'Eramo, and I am the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of The Toledo Clinic (TCI); a 250 provider organization which manages the care for over 250,000 patients in NW Ohio. We are a comprehensive physician and ancillary service group providing nearly all aspects of care, ranging cardiology and oncology to orthopedic and neurosurgery.

I would like to take this opportunity to share why the implementation of this bill would be essential to improving the efficiency, access and overall management of patient care; as such the purpose of current preauthorization efforts are antiquated and have little to no impact on the course or the cost of care.

The staff of TCI contend that many preauthorizations can take up to two weeks or more to complete, putting the patient and the physician in an unnecessary state of anticipation and anxiety. This is further compounded by the additional burden that even when supplemented with preauthorization approvals, there is no guarantee that the service is going to be reimbursed by the payer. A more cynical person would think that this is simply reflective of the ancient insurance tactics of delay, defer, and deny.

The current preauthorization protocols affect many specialties, from cancer treatment to joint replacement. As more and more insurers are requiring prior authorization, it is imperative that the modern provider create efficiency and low operating costs to offset these administrative costs. However, what the payers have implemented is just the opposite, which is an onerous system that does not take advantage of modern technology or common sense.

While we understand, to a small degree, the necessity of prior authorization and are inclined to work with insurance carriers to ease this administrative hassle of information management, The Toledo Clinic is subsequently supporting SB 129 because fundamental changes are required to improve access and efficacy of care. Patients and their providers should be allowed to have the capacity to choose best methods to render care and fight disease.

The Toledo Clinic

Senate Bill 129 will allow Ohio physicians to take advantage of practical and available technology by electronically submitting and receiving preauthorizations approvals and feedback. This will significantly reduce inefficient process around the prior authorization hurdle and provide us with an improved ability to better serve our patients. It is the obligation of both the payers and physicians to enhance the health of our patients by providing access, high quality, and efficient care. On behalf of The Toledo Clinic, we strongly support SB 129.