

March 20, 2017



The Honorable Stephen Huffman
Chair, House Health Committee
77 S. High St
12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Huffman:

On behalf of the more than 13,500 U.S. members of the American Academy of Dermatology Association (“Academy”), we write in strong support of HB 72. This legislation would be a critical step to ensure patients have access to their prescription medicines. Pursuant to HB 72, health insurers would be required to expeditiously grant a step therapy override determination request if, in the professional judgment of the prescribing physician, the step therapy requirement would be medically inappropriate for that patient. The Academy urges the Ohio House Health Committee to support HB 72.

Step therapy protocols, a cost containment tool used by health insurance plans, require patients to try one or more prescription drugs before coverage is provided for a drug selected by the patient’s health care provider. The Academy understands the need to contain health care costs, but we are concerned that step therapy strategies to medication and other treatment selection have the potential to impact patient outcomes and quality of life. Step therapy prevents dermatologists from prescribing drugs they know will provide the best treatment results in the most expeditious manner. Requiring patients to try and fail treatments jeopardizes the health of patients who may have an adverse reaction, potentially resulting in dangerous consequences, after taking an inappropriate drug. HB 72 would ensure that step therapy protocols used by health plans in Ohio will preserve the health care provider’s right to make treatment decisions in the best interest of the patient. Physicians know their patients’ medical history, which enables them to identify potential contraindications and life-threatening adverse reactions. Retaining physicians’ medical judgement in patients’ treatment plans is a cost-effective way to prevent health care dollars from being used on medications that are not effective. It also prevents patients from a prolonged treatment that includes scheduling multiple visits to their physician and spending money on prescription medications that are not effective.

The Academy appreciates the opportunity to provide written comments on this important public health issue and urges your support for HB 72. As physicians,

American Academy of Dermatology Association
Excellence in Dermatology™

1445 New York Ave., NW,
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005-2134

Main: 202.842.3555
Fax: 202.842.4355
Website: www.aad.org

Henry W. Lim, MD
President

Suzanne M. Olbricht, MD
President-Elect

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Vice President

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Elaine Weiss
Executive Director and CEO

our number one priority is the health and welfare of our patients. The enactment of this legislation will improve access to prescription medications that are in the best interest of the patient. For further information, please contact Lisa Albany, associate director, state policy, at lalbany@aad.org (202) 842-3555.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry W. Lim, MD, FAAD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Henry W. Lim, MD, FAAD
President
American Academy of Dermatology Association

cc: The Honorable Nickie J. Antonio
The Honorable Terry Johnson