

March 21, 2017

Representative Stephen Huffman
Chair
Health Committee
The Ohio House of Representatives

Representative Nickie Antonio
Ranking Member
Health Committee
The Ohio House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the House Health Committee,

I write to express support for House Bill 72, *Adopt requirements for step therapy protocols*. I am a pediatric gastroenterologist at Nationwide Children's Hospital and I have seen step therapy affect several of my patients. Step therapy delays appropriate treatment and can lead to a progression of symptoms and unnecessary hospitalization.

I volunteer with the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation which recently surveyed the Foundation's Ohio constituency about step therapy. Our findings included the following:

- 35.5% of IBD patients polled in Ohio had to go through a step therapy process, out of the patients that had to go through step therapy, the doctor was only able to intervene 29% of the time
- 90% of patients polled in Ohio believe step therapy is a barrier to timely and appropriate care
- 98% of patients polled in Ohio support legislation to ensure doctors can prescribe the most appropriate medication

As a physician, there are times when we know that the insurer-preferred medication is not appropriate for a patient, yet the insurer denies coverage of a medication that's clinically warranted until the patient fails the insurer-preferred medication. I specialize in Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, and I work directly with patients and their families to understand their needs. I support HB 72 because it would strengthen the physician-patient relationship and help patients access the medications they need in a timely manner. I urge you to pass HB 72.

Ross Maltz, MD
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