



March 16, 2017

Members, House Committee on Health
Ohio State House
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: NORD Support for House Bill 72

Dear Members of the Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee:

On behalf of the 1-in-10 people in Ohio living with a rare disease, the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) urges you to support HB 72, an act relating to step therapy protocols.

NORD is the leading voice of the rare disease community dedicated to helping people with rare “orphan” diseases and assisting the organizations that serve them. Any disease affecting fewer than 200,000 Americans is considered rare. We believe strongly that every patient deserves the medical care that is best suited for their medical situation and that is most likely to give them the best results. Based on the reports we receive from member organizations, as well as individuals, step therapy is increasingly being applied in Ohio with little regard for a patient’s treatment history and specific medical needs.

As written, HB 72 will address this issue by providing new protections for patients when health plan implement step therapy. First, it requires that step therapy is based on medical criteria and clinical guidelines developed by independent experts. Second, it will create a simple and accessible appeals process for patients and providers. And finally, it will allow patients to be exempted from step therapy completely based on a proven medical need.

To ensure patient safety, Ohio needs to ensure that step therapy does not interfere with appropriate care. By implementing the protections outlined in HB 72, Ohio will be protecting patients while still enabling health plans to achieve the cost saving benefits of step therapy when it is appropriate.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this legislation and strongly urge the committee to support HB 72.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter L. Saltonstall", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Peter L. Saltonstall, CEO