



**Senate Bill 56  
Proponent Testimony**

Gary Dougherty  
Director, State Government Affairs and Advocacy  
American Diabetes Association  
Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee – March 7, 2017

Chairman Burke and Members of the Committee:

I write to you today to share the support of the American Diabetes Association for SB 56.

With more than 13.5% of adult Ohioans living with diabetes, SB 56 will help to ensure they get the medications that meet their medical needs as they work with their physicians to prevent costly and horrific diabetes complications including amputation, blindness, kidney failure, and heart attack.

Health insurance plans are increasingly making use of step therapy protocols under which patients are required to try one or more prescription drugs before coverage is allowed for a drug selected by the patient's health care provider – with an absolute override of the medical judgment of the patient's health care provider. Inappropriate step therapy delays access to physician-prescribed medications by making a patient try and fail one or more medications. During these time periods, patients may experience worsening of conditions that can be debilitating or even life threatening.

Whereas the goal of controlling costs is admirable, the larger goal of ensuring patients receive the best and most effective treatment for their condition, as recommended by their treating physician, should be the objective of our health care system.

By establishing a clear and independent process for requesting an exception for step therapy protocols when necessary, SB 56 will put patient care back in the hands of health care providers who know patients best.

A patient-centered approach should be used to guide medical decisions. SB 56 does just that and gives health care providers the tools they need to provide appropriate patient care.

On behalf of the more than 1.3 million Ohioans living with diabetes, I encourage you to support SB 56.

Thank you very much for your consideration.



**1 in 11**

Americans has diabetes today.



Every **23 seconds**, someone in the United States is diagnosed with diabetes.

More than **18,000**

youth are diagnosed with type 1 diabetes every year.

Gary Dougherty  
Director, State Government Affairs & Advocacy  
3495 Bear Pointe Circle  
Powell, OH 43065  
1-800-676-4065 x4832  
[gdougherty@diabetes.org](mailto:gdougherty@diabetes.org)