



May 21, 2018

The Honorable Dave Burke  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Human Services and Medicaid  
Statehouse, Room 201  
Columbus, OH 43215

***Re: Support for S.B. No. 56 - Adopt requirements for step therapy protocols***

Dear Chairman Burke:

On behalf of the Alliance for Patient Access (AfPA), I write to urge your support for Senate Bill No. 56 (SB 56) that will be considered by the Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid Committee tomorrow. AfPA is a national network of physicians and health care providers, including members practicing in Ohio, with the shared mission of ensuring patient access to approved therapies and appropriate clinical care.

Step therapy is a utilization management tool used by health insurance plans to contain rising health care costs. Sometimes called “fail first,” step therapy protocols require patients to try and fail a lower cost medication before the patient can access the medicine their physician prescribed. SB 56, sponsored by Senators Peggy Lehner-R and Charleta Tavares-D, is a bipartisan bill that would reform the step therapy process and provide prescribers and patients the ability to determine the best treatment regimen without unnecessary and risky treatment delay. Importantly, SB 56 does not seek to ban step therapy protocols but places greater emphasis on protecting the patient’s treatment plan, as determined by the prescriber’s clinical expertise.

This legislation would achieve the goals prioritized by AfPA members, specifically:

- Preserve the patient-physician relationship;
- Provide a timely and convenient process for review of a request to bypass use of a step drug and allow for automatic exceptions; and
- Promote better health outcomes and eliminate delays in patient treatment.

On behalf of the Alliance for Patient Access, thank you for your committee’s consideration of step therapy reforms, and I urge your support of SB 56. By prioritizing passage of this legislation, Ohio would join the growing list of 17 states that have enacted similar step therapy legislation, including Indiana, West Virginia, Iowa, Illinois, New York, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas, and most recently Minnesota to name a few.

Thank you in advance for protecting Ohio patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Kennedy', written in a cursive style.

Brian Kennedy  
Executive Director

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