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## TESTIMONY – STATE STEP THERAPY LEGISLATION

**Ohio 132<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly**  
*Public Hearing for Senate Bill 56*

**Submitted By:**

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*Disclosure: The Global Healthy Living Foundation accepts grants and charitable contributions from pharmaceutical companies, the government, private foundations and individuals. We have received scientific briefings from pharmaceutical companies, as well as from our independent medical advisory board.*

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and committee members,

My name is Corey Greenblatt and I am commenting on behalf of the more than 100,000 chronically ill patients, including your fellow Ohio residents, whom we represent. I want to thank you for allowing me to comment today in support of the passage of Senate Bill 56, adapting Step Therapy protocols. This bill put the patient first by regulating a potentially damaging utilization review practice often used by pharmacy benefit managers and health insurers to control administrative costs.

Passage of SB 56 would improve step therapy protocols, a one-size-fits-all utilization management practice which requires patients to try and fail one or more prescription drugs before coverage is provided for the medication originally chosen by the patient's health care provider.

SB 56 does **not** prohibit insurers from using step therapy and it does **not** require insurers to cover any specific medication. It seeks to improve the step therapy process by balancing cost containment with common-sense patient needs.

The patients that GHLF represents are among the millions of patients who are subjected to unnecessary barriers put into place by insurance companies in their quest to increase their profits, not as insurers often say, "to lower drug costs." The patient does not experience a lower cost because of step therapy or "fail first" tactics. In addition, oftentimes patients have to "fail" up to five times before they are finally given the prescription that their doctor originally prescribed.

The duration of this protocol is left up to the insurance company and can last up to 130 days per medication. Using step therapy, insurance companies have the ability to delay or even override a treatment plan created by a doctor and patient to the point where permanent, irreversible damage can occur.

Step therapy undermines physicians' ability to effectively treat patients and lowers the quality of care, resulting in set-backs and disease progression, which, even if reversible, causes undue suffering and disease lingering, resulting in poor quality-of-life and lost productivity.

At its core, SB 56 is about one thing: Patient Protection. It guarantees that health care protocols are implemented with the patient's interest at their core, not the profit motives of private companies with opaque operations. GHLF hopes that you will consider people living with complex autoimmune diseases, and the undue suffering they endure with step therapy. A vote in favor of SB 56 will improve their happiness, their health, and their productivity.

**Ohioans cannot wait any longer to have the patient protections in SB 56.** If this bill is passed, Ohio would join the growing list of 20 states that have enacted similar step therapy legislation, including Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Iowa, Arkansas, Louisiana, New York, and Texas.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this legislation and would be pleased to provide any further information that you may require.

Respectfully,



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