



November 30, 2018

The Honorable Dave Burke
Chairman, Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Burke,

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, I write to express our concerns about a specific provision contained in Senate Bill 56, legislation that seeks to make changes to the way health insurers utilize the practice of step therapy. As you know, rising health care costs continue to be a major concern to Ohio employers, and step therapy is an important tool that helps balance access to effective drugs with cost containment.

The specific provision to which I refer is the bill's requirement that an exemption to step therapy must be granted if "the required prescription drug is not in the best interest of the patient." This exemption is very broad and subjective, and we believe it could be used to circumvent the step therapy process, effectively rendering it meaningless.

Since the bill was introduced in 2017, the Ohio Chamber has consistently advocated for the removal of this provision. Some other concerns we initially had with the as-introduced version of SB 56 have previously been addressed, and we appreciate the willingness of the bill's sponsor, Sen. Peggy Lehner, to accommodate these concerns. However, in the most recent version of SB 56 that we have seen, this provision remains.

Any effort to weaken step therapy risks further increasing health care costs. Therefore, we urge you to please remove this provision from the legislation. Doing so would alleviate our remaining concerns about the negative impact SB 56 could have on the costs of employer health care coverage. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Lake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Lake
Vice President, Government Affairs