



***Written Testimony Supporting SB 252
Submitted to the House Health Committee
November 18, 2020***

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chairman Holmes and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 252, which prohibits step therapy or fail first coverage of drugs used to treat advanced, metastatic cancer. My name is Dana Carter, and I am the Regional Manager for State Policy & Advocacy.

Susan G. Komen believes patients and their physicians should be able to make treatment decisions based on the particular needs of each patient.

Step therapy, also referred to as “fail first”, requires a patient to first try a health plan preferred (often generic alternative) drug prior to receiving coverage for the originally prescribed drug. Step therapy is a method of utilization management that health plans employ to control costs by authorizing treatment with a cheaper drug therapy first and then progressing to the prescribed treatment only if necessary.

According to a study published in the American Journal of Managed Care, step therapy may create barriers for patients receiving their medication, and ultimately result in higher medical utilization costs. These protocols should optimize affordable, effective and appropriate access to care, not lead to delayed treatments, poorer patient outcomes and increased medical costs.

Currently, in the United States more than 154,000 women are living with metastatic breast cancer. Metastatic breast cancer is an advanced stage of breast cancer where tumor cells have spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body. It is estimated that nearly all of the more than 42,000 breast cancer deaths expected this year will be a result of metastasis including more than 1,700 Ohioans.

Although metastatic breast cancer cannot be cured, it can often be treated. Treatment is highly personalized and must be based on joint decision making between patients and their healthcare providers, as they are most capable in determining the appropriate treatment options and health background. Unfortunately, most step therapy protocols rely on generalized information regarding patients and their treatments as opposed to considering unique experiences, previous responses to treatments and any comorbidities.

To date, Komen has provided more than \$210 million in nearly 500 research grants including clinical trials, focused on metastatic breast cancer. This research has resulted in a better understanding of metastatic breast cancer, advancements in targeted therapies and improvements in both quality of life and survival rates. Ensuring patients are receiving consistent and effective treatments is even greater in situations when treating patients with potentially life ending diseases such as metastatic breast cancer, any delays or deviations could be deadly.

Patients and physicians should have the opportunity to choose the best treatments and therapies without the burden of overly restrictive cost containment policies.

As committed partners in the fight against breast cancer, we know how deeply important it is for metastatic cancer patients to have fair and equal access to the treatments that may save their lives. As such, we strongly support SB 252 and urge you to pass this critical legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.