



Memorandum in Support of HB 135
P. Scott Lipps
Chair, Health Committee
77 S High St #12
Columbus, OH 43215

March 4, 2021

Dear Chairman Lipps and Members of the Ohio Health Committee:

Please accept this letter as the National Infusion Center Association's (NICA) position on HB 135 and include it as part of the public hearing record. NICA is a nonprofit trade association that provides a national voice for non-hospital, community-based infusion providers that offer a safe, efficient, and more cost-effective alternative to hospital care settings for provider-administered medications. NICA represents the thousands of community-based infusion centers across the country, including those in Ohio. On behalf of the infusion providers and patients they serve, NICA strongly supports HB 135 and the protections it provides Ohio patients.

When dealing with complex diseases, conventional drugs are not always effective, therefore biological products are sometimes the only hope for patients suffering from autoimmune diseases or other chronic illnesses. Naturally, these drugs can be extremely expensive. Cost-share assistance, in the form of a copay card or a third-party contribution, allows patients to afford these life-saving medications by contributing to their deductibles. Copay accumulator programs that prevent cost-share assistance from counting towards a patient's out-of-pocket costs and force patients off of their medications due to affordability are simply reckless.

As I'm sure you know, it is more important than ever that patients avoid preventable hospitalizations caused by a disruption in their care, not only in terms of hospital capacity but also in an effort to keep patients with complex and autoimmune conditions away from potential exposure to other illnesses, like COVID-19. If a patient can no longer afford their medications and cost assistance is denied, we can only expect diseases to go unmanaged, more hospital visits, and higher healthcare costs for Ohioans.

The passage of HB 135 would allow Ohio patients to remain on their life-saving medications by ensuring that all payments made by or for a patient count. On behalf of the providers we serve, tending to patients battling chronic conditions for the rest of their lives, we sincerely request your support for HB 135, which would protect Ohio patients' access to care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kindyl Boyer".

Kindyl Boyer
Director of Advocacy, National Infusion Center Association (NICA)
3307 Northland Dr, Ste 160
Austin, TX 78731

