

Senator Steve Huffman
Chair, Ohio Senate Health Committee

November 29, 2022

Testimony in support of HB 135

Dear Chairman Huffman and Members of the Senate Health Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to share my support for HB 135 – Legislation to prohibit certain health insurance cost-sharing practices

Our child lives with Gaucher disease, a rare disorder. Identifying a rare disease is complicated. Finding the right treatment is just as difficult and often expensive. Rare-disease families often rely on third-party financial assistance to help pay for treatments, from places like [The Assistance Fund](#), [Accessia Health](#), and from pharmaceutical manufacturers and friends and family.

Unfortunately, most insurance companies have stopped allowing patients to apply financial assistance to their out-of-pocket cost burden with policies called co-pay accumulators. Not only do these policies discriminate against patients with rare diseases, worse yet, according to one evaluation, 99.6% of co-pay assistance [was used for drugs with no generic alternative](#). Insurers keep the financial assistance and still require the patient to pay their full deductible.

Families of rare disease patients rely on help for their medications and therapies and are asking the members of the Ohio Senate to pass House Bill 135. This legislation will help these families by reducing their out-of-pocket costs by allowing the payments from co-pay assistance to count toward their deductibles. The House of Representatives voted unanimously for the bill, 86-0, and we encourage the Ohio Senate to pass this legislation as quickly as possible to support Ohioans living with rare diseases.

Sincerely,

Theresa Sweeny
Lakewood, Ohio