



Ohio Life Sciences

November 28, 2022

**To: Senate Health Committee, The Ohio Senate**

**Re: Testimony Supporting House Bill 135**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee, my name is Eddie Pauline, President & CEO of Ohio Life Sciences (OLS), formerly known to you as BioOhio. I write today to offer our organization's strong support for House Bill 135, legislation that unanimously passed the Ohio House that will prohibit the continuation of certain harmful policies against patients by health plans and pharmacy benefit managers.

The life sciences in Ohio are evolving as one of the U.S.'s core hubs for the research, development, discovery, and manufacturing of new cures and treatments for patients suffering from some of the most life-threatening diseases and chronic conditions. Patients are at the very heart of the life sciences industry. As the statewide organization representing over 4,200 life sciences organizations, Ohio Life Sciences respectfully submits this testimony in support of HB 135.

Health insurers and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) have increasingly shifted a greater share of the costs for specialty prescription medicines to their patients and beneficiaries, including the discriminatory practice of copay accumulator adjustment policies. A report from IQVIA shows that 99.6% of all medications eligible for manufacturer financial assistance have no generic alternatives. Make no mistake, health plans and PBMs determine the medications ultimately available to patients.

Manufacturer and third-party assistance programs exist for patients whose treatments have been steered to high out-of-pocket costs, formularies, and specialty pharmacies. These assistance programs help patients meet their ever-growing, mandated out-of-pocket costs. Our organization cannot understand why there would be opposition to this bill. HB 135 simply requires health plans and PBMs to honor any third-party patient assistance. We do not believe this bill will drive up costs.

All patients should be able to utilize the full benefit of any patient assistance programs. Ohio is the place where innovative treatments are being created - we also need to be a place where they're accessible to Ohioans, including the 1.5 million Ohioans at risk from copay accumulator adjusters.

We urge this committee and the General Assembly to support HB 135 and provide much-needed relief for Ohioans facing overwhelming costs for their prescription medications.

Sincerely,

Eddie Pauline  
President & CEO  
Ohio Life Sciences