

ACS Chapters | Ohio



December 5th, 2023

The Honorable Brian Lampton
Chair, Insurance Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Ohio Statehouse
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Lampton, Vice Chair Barhorst, Ranking Member Miranda, and members of the Ohio House Insurance Committee—

On behalf of the Fellows of the American College of Surgeons who call Ohio home, I am writing today to express our support for House Bill 291, sponsored by State Representatives Sarah Carruthers and Beth Liston. This bill would protect patients from harmful changes to drug coverage during a health plan year.

Through the ACS Commission on Cancer, our Fellows are dedicated to improving the survival and quality of life for cancer patients. Further, surgeons across Ohio provide care to patients with many health issues that require prescription drugs as part of their treatment. All of these patients are at risk of losing access to necessary prescription drugs due to the practice of non-medical switching.

Prior to the start of a plan year, enrollees are provided information on their health plan's formulary. This document lays out the contractual coverage that the enrollee and their family will receive, including which drugs require prior authorization, any copays or cost-sharing amounts, and whether or not a specific drug is covered. Health plans have the ability to change drug coverage at the start of each plan year to reflect changes to rebates and other negotiated factors between plans and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

Unfortunately, we are seeing more instances of health plans changing drug coverage during a plan year. These non-medical changes to formularies can threaten patient access to necessary prescription drugs. This process is unfair and can adversely impact patient outcomes, including those who require surgical intervention. Passage of HB 291 is pro-patient, and we urge you to pass this measure. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alisha Reiss, MD, FACS
President
Ohio Chapter, American College of Surgeons