



September 30, 2025

The Honorable Steve Wilson, Chairman  
Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance, and Technology Committee  
One Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and Members of the Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance, and Technology Committee, the Ohio Hematology Oncology Society (OHOS) and the Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) are pleased to support **SB 160**, which would protect Ohio patients from non-medical switching of medications during the same plan year. We thank you for your consideration and **urge the Committee to pass SB 160**.

OHOS and ASCO are committed to supporting policies that reduce cost while preserving quality of cancer care; however, such policies should be developed and implemented in a way that does not undermine patient access. Payer utilization management approaches like non-medical switching are of particular concern because they undermine patient access to the most appropriate treatment for their disease as well as erode patient confidence in their provider's ability to construct an effective care plan. While OHOS and ASCO understand health plans need strategies for controlling costs, changing a patient's treatment plan for reasons other than efficacy, side effects, or adherence without prior notification of their physician is inappropriate and endangers patient access to high-quality care.

Treatments preferred by payers may cost less, but may not be the best treatment available for the patient. Oncologists take great care to construct highly individualized treatment plans specifically designed to be most effective for each patient. If a patient is re-directed to a less effective drug or one that is not in their treatment plan, and their disease worsens, the payer may face higher costs for more specialized treatments later. This can ultimately increase costs, as savings by insurers are cancelled out by higher costs to the overall health care system as a result of poorer patient outcomes.

With the welfare of Ohio cancer patients in mind, we are pleased SB 160 places safeguards around potentially harmful practices like non-medical switching by:

- **Protecting patients who are already stable** on a medication from potential physical and financial toxicity caused by tiering, coverage, and formulary restrictions that often coincide with payer decisions to engage in non-medical switching;
- **Preventing payers from imposing higher cost sharing** on patients who are stable on their current regimen. To limit or discourage use, payers are increasingly placing cancer therapies on the "specialty tier" of their formularies, which shifts a large portion of the cost of care from the payer to the patient. High coinsurance rates related to specialty tier designation undermine the primary purpose of health insurance, causing cancer patients to face significant financial burdens or to forgo access to life-extending and life-saving drugs;

- **Limiting the use of restrictive formularies**, which are particularly problematic in oncology because cancer drug therapies often are not clinically interchangeable. Restrictive formularies may preclude a patient's best option for a successful outcome and should not be a cost containment strategy for cancer drug therapies. Prescription drugs have different indications, different mechanisms of action, and different side effects depending on the diagnosis and comorbidities of an individual patient. Even if the threat of non-medical switching is mitigated, plans restricting drug benefits would limit the ability of providers to make the best medical decisions for the care of their patients; and
- **Ensuring timely access to care** by preventing payers from requiring that patients who are already stable on their treatment plan receive additional prior authorization approvals, which could delay access to care for patients and increase the administrative burden for providers.

**OHOS and ASCO urge the Committee to pass SB 160** to protect Ohio patients with cancer from non-medical switching of medications during a plan year. Please contact [Nick Telesco](#) at ASCO or [Matt Whitehead](#), representing OHOS, if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Slobodan Stanisic, MD  
President  
Ohio Hematology Oncology Society



Lynn Schuchter, MD, FASCO  
Chair of the Board  
Association for Clinical Oncology

*OHOS represents over 200 physicians specializing in the practice of Hematology and Oncology (blood disorders and cancer). OHOS is committed to promoting excellence in the care of patients afflicted with cancer and hematologic disorders in Ohio. ASCO is an organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With over 50,000 members, our core mission is to ensure that cancer patients have meaningful access to high-quality cancer care. For a more detailed understanding of our policy recommendations on this issue, we invite you to read the [ASCO Position Statement: Utilization Management](#) by our affiliate, the American Society of Clinical Oncology.*