

To: Members of the Ohio House Health and Aging Committee

Fr: Tim Maglione, JD, Senior Director, Ohio State Medical Association  
Monica Hueckel, Director, Ohio State Medical Association

Da: April 26, 2016

Re: Support for HB 248

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On behalf of the 16,000 physician, resident and medical student members of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA), **we are writing to express our support for HB 248.**

HB 248 would require health insurers and the Department of Medicaid to provide coverage for abuse-deterrent formulations (ADF) of opioid analgesics.

ADF opioids represent a great opportunity for the physician and health care community to continue to do all we can to combat the prescription drug abuse epidemic. These formulations of opioid painkillers have properties that deter abuse by making methods of abusing the drug much more difficult or less rewarding. However, because these tamper-resistant drugs are at times more costly than their non-ADF counterparts, many insurance companies will not provide coverage for them, even though data show they save lives by helping to prevent overdose deaths.

Under this legislation, insurers and Medicaid would not be permitted to exclude or deny reimbursement of ADF opioids solely due to the drug's cost. It would also eliminate "fail-first" step therapy policies for ADF opioids, meaning patients would never be required to try using a non-ADF opioid in order to obtain access to coverage for an ADF opioid.

We believe that this legislation serves to increase access to ADF opioids, thus adding another tool to the toolbox in our fight against the prescription drug abuse epidemic, while also ensuring that more patients in pain still have access to effective pain relief.

HB 248 also requires insurers to consider certain GCOAT guidelines and statutes when implementing prior authorization requirements for opioid medications. While the OSMA believes these requirements are currently being utilized by the prescribing community, we would suggest that when a prior authorization requirement is implemented, it is done in an efficient, transparent and fair way. In this regard, we would also urge the House to approve SB 129, a prior authorization reform measure pending in the House Insurance Committee.

We would like to thank Representatives Sprague and Antonio for their willingness to address issues we've raised during the deliberations on this bill and we encourage you to support HB 248. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.