

Chairman Lipps, Vice Chair Holmes, Ranking Member Russo, thank you for the opportunity to share proponent testimony on HB 37. My name is Sheila Speth. Both my teenage son David and my adult brother Patrick have Type 1 Diabetes.

In 2015, Ohio passed an emergency prescription refill law (HB 188) called Kevin's Law. It was named for Kevin Houdeshell, who lost his life because he was unable to refill his insulin prescription on a holiday weekend. His pharmacist could not reach his doctor and could not fill the prescription as a result. Since Ohio passed Kevin's law, 20 other states have done the same and four are currently considering it, thanks to the tireless efforts of his family who do not want this tragedy for anyone else.

HB 37 would expand that emergency prescription refill law to allow for 3 emergency refills per year rather than one. It would also require insurance companies to cover that emergency refill. Not only is this the right thing to do, but it is also more cost effective than the alternative. An ER visit to stabilize blood sugars costs \$10,000 on average.

Where insulin is concerned there are several reasons someone may need an emergency refill, including a broken vial, insulin that was left in the heat (during power outages, for example), a bad vial (yes, this happens), needing more insulin than usual due to illness or stress, insulin forgotten at home or in a hotel room (as it is often kept in the refrigerator) and equipment failures that lead to losing the insulin in the reservoir of an insulin pump. My son is a college student. He relies on a college residence hall refrigerator to keep his insulin at the proper temperature. Should there be a failure with the fridge, or a roommate that mistakenly leaves the door open for a long time, he could potentially need new insulin on a moment's notice. David is very responsible, but mistakes happen, and insulin is a lifesaving medication for him. He cannot go without it.

It is necessary for insurance to cover this because of the outrageous cost of insulin. Since 2009, the cost of insulin has gone from \$40 a vial to around \$300 a vial with no change in the product. Research indicates that as much as 70% of the cost of insulin is made up of pharmacy benefit manager rebates. Please know that "Walmart" insulin is not the answer...it is an older version of insulin that that was once the best option but has not been for nearly 20 years. Many people do not know how to accurately dose it.

My brother has had Type 1 Diabetes for 33 years. Although I learned a lot about it, and I watched Patrick take care of himself, I never really understood it until my son was diagnosed with T1D 2 years ago. Insulin is life or death, and a T1D never forgets that. The weight of this fact is on his mind all the time. If my son or brother forgets his insulin, or drops the vial, or accidentally spills it, or the power goes out for a long time and it is not kept at the correct temperature, he will need more right away. Knowing that it can be obtained in an emergency situation brings peace of mind.

I urge you to pass HB 37 to make it easier for them to obtain insulin in emergency situations. This could save my son's or brother's life one day. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sheila Speth

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