

10/05/21

Chairman Huffman and members of the Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share proponent testimony on HB 37.

My name is Mindi Patterson and I live in Dayton. I am a parent of two sons with Type 1 Diabetes, a wife to a husband with Type 1, and sister-in-law of Meaghan Carter who had Type 1 for 18 years. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease that attacks and kills the pancreas beta cells that produce insulin. My youngest son, Martin, was diagnosed at 8yo in December of 2013, my oldest son, Pierce, was diagnosed at 14yo in March of 2015, my husband, Roc, was diagnosed in April 2018, and Meaghan was diagnosed in October 2000. I am in support of House Bill 37.

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. Since Ohio passed Kevin's law, twenty other states have done the same and four are currently considering it.

HB37 would expand the refill law to allow for 3 emergency refills per year rather than one. It would also require insurance to cover the cost of that emergency refill. This is the right thing to do as the list price of one vial of insulin without insurance is around \$300 a vial, and most type ones need more than one vial a month.

With insulin, there are several reasons someone may need an emergency refill, for example power outages that make the insulin go bad, insulin that is ineffective due to poor production, needing more insulin due to illness or stress, insulin forgotten at home or in the hotel during travel, equipment failures that leads to losing insulin in the reservoir of an insulin pump. With three type ones in my family we have experienced many of these. Within the last year my oldest son ran out of insulin due to his needs changing but before his new prescription could be filled. Our pharmacy was able to do an emergency fill, but what happens if he breaks a vial or becomes ill or our power goes out and he needs more than what he is prescribed? We have had pump failures (one time three in a row where we lost almost an entire vial of insulin), and the monetary issue has caused much anxiety and stress for my entire family. We cannot afford to pay out of pocket without insurance for insulin. For just one of my children, insulin and the supplies needed for a month without insurance would be around \$3,000. With children, especially, because of growth hormones their insulin needs are constantly changing. We are constantly juggling to make sure everyone has what they need to continue to live. Please try to understand how it feels to look in the fridge and gauge how much life your children or husband have based on the quantity of a medication or the panic that happens because all you have is what is in their pump and you scramble to get insulin any way you possibly can. That is our life. At the beginning of the month we breathe a sigh of relief that everyone can live for the month. The

beginning of this month we paid over \$500 for insulin and supplies with insurance to live for October. But what about November? What if I lose my job and our insurance as my husband is permanently disabled and I carry the insurance through my job? What if I die in a car accident, would that mean my family wouldn't be able to live? These thoughts are constantly on our minds.

And “Walmart” insulin is not the answer. My sister-in-law, Meaghan Carter, had Type 1 Diabetes for 18 years. She lost her nursing job and insurance the summer of 2018. She was able to pick up short term employment those last months of her life as a nurse but was let go before she qualified for insurance (90 days) each time. She struggled to afford her prescribed insulin and December 20th with only \$50 left she purchased “Walmart” insulin. She passed away five days later on Christmas due to the months of rationing and the inability to afford her prescribed medicine. She got her next paycheck December 26th. Her death didn't just impact us then, it continues to impact us. As a nurse, Meaghan would be here offering respite for me, advice for continuing care for her brother, taking care of her parents, offering advice and hugs and so much more. Her loss is a hole in the hearts of many and is felt daily. “Walmart” insulin is an older version of insulin that has not been regularly prescribed for more than 20 years and many, including health care professionals, do not know how to accurately dose for it and if they have to resort to it they aren't necessarily able to afford seeing a professional for help with it.

Besides insulin, my husband is on a blood thinner for a blood clot, I am on medicine for my heart, and our youngest has Hashimoto's and takes a thyroid medicine daily for the rest of his life. This bill would ensure that we never go without medications that keep us alive.

I urge you to support the passing of HB37 to protect Ohioans in emergency need for life-saving medications. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Mindi Patterson

Dayton, Ohio 45410

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