TO: The Honorable Scott Lipps, Chairman

 The Honorable Janine Boyd, Ranking Member

 Members of the House Health Committee

FROM: Jimelle Rumberg, Ph.D., CAE, Executive Director

 The Ohio Foot & ankle Medical Association

DATE: February 3, 2020

RE: Support for House Bill 418 (Non-Medical Switching)

On behalf of the podiatric physicians and surgeons who make up the Ohio Foot & ankle Medical Association (OHFAMA), I am writing to convey our members support for House Bill 418, the “non-medical switching” legislation jointly sponsored by Representatives Randi Clites and Sara Carruthers.

Ohio’s podiatric physicians have long supported continuity of care for our patients and the strong maintenance of the patient-physician relationship. Our members have seen this vital relationship interrupted for various reasons, many of which often do not have anything to do with the quality of care being received by our patients. OHFAMA believes HB 418 will help address that interruption of care by preventing the practice of “non-medical switching” in which patients are forced in the middle of their coverage year to switch to a less expensive treatment. As we clearly know, these random interruptions of care can often lead to increased emergency room visits, hospitalizations and other adverse patient care situations. This policy and the negative side effects of this business practice can actually ***add*** costs to patients and business owners in our current healthcare environment.

While HB 418 only addresses the practice of insurers who randomly remove prescription drugs from a drug formulary during a plan year, this bill will be an important step in addressing the overall issue of continuity of care for patients. When patients are randomly displaced from their physicians, hospitals, prescription drug therapy regimes or other vital health care services, everyone loses in the health care supply chain.

Our association believes that treatment decisions should mainly rest in the sphere of the provider-patient relationship, as this enables the creation of individualized care plans that suit the specific needs of each patient. This is especially vital to patients who daily must deal with chronic or complex medical conditions. Stability is of utmost importance to these patients and HB 418 can serve as a useful tool to provide this critical element to successful patient care and positive outcomes.

On behalf of Ohio’s podiatric physicians and surgeons, I ask you to support HB 418. As always, we appreciate the consideration of the views of our members and the patients they serve.