

November 29, 2022

Ohio Senate Health Committee  
Ohio Statehouse  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**RE: Support House Bill 135 to Protect Copay Assistance for Patients**

Dear Chairman Huffman and members of the Committee:

I am writing to you today to thank the Ohio Senate Health Committee for holding a public hearing on House Bill 135 which would ensure that the value of copay assistance counts for patients across the State of Ohio. I fully support this bill and urge the Committee to take action to advance HB 135 to lower out-of-pocket costs for patients in Ohio and help them access their prescription medications.

Patients rely on copay assistance to access their medications and manage their health, especially where no generic alternatives exist for their condition. But nothing stops insurance plans in Ohio from implementing “copay accumulator” programs that don’t count the value of copay assistance towards patients’ annual deductible or out-of-pocket cost responsibilities. These policies allow Wisconsin health plans to increase their profits by requiring patients to pay the same amount *twice* to get closer to their annual out-of-pocket limit. When patients cannot afford their medications, they often skip doses or abandon treatment entirely, worsening individual health outcomes and increasing overall health care system costs.

To date, 15 states and Puerto Rico have already taken legislative action to ensure health plans count the value of copay assistance towards patient out-of-pocket costs. Ohio should be next.

Consistent and affordable access to prescription medications has become even more critical for vulnerable patients who are experiencing the health and economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. I strongly urge the Senate Health Committee to support this bill and stand with patients in helping those with chronic and complex conditions access the treatments they need to live a healthy and productive life.

Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to Ohio communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nathan M. Schaefer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nathan Schaefer  
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