

November 28, 2022

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman, Chairman
The Honorable Niraj Antani, Vice Chairman
The Honorable Nickie J. Antonio, Ranking Member
Ohio Senate Health Committee

Re: Support for HB 135 Copay Accumulator Bill

Dear Chairman Huffman, Vice Chairman Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and all members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter. We are writing on behalf of The ALS Association and the nearly 1,000 ALS patients and their families in the State of Ohio, in support of **HB 135, the Copay Accumulator Bill**, which will significantly help reduce the out-of-pocket healthcare costs for our community.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a fatal progressive neurodegenerative disease that slowly robs a person's ability to walk, talk, eat, and eventually breathe. The cost of care for someone living with ALS is estimated to be as much as \$250,000 per year. As with many people living with complex medical conditions, those with ALS must take various drugs to maintain their health. The copays associated with acquiring them significantly add to this crushing financial burden.

One way that patients afford their care is through copay assistance programs, where cards or coupons from nonprofit organizations or drug manufacturers help reduce the cost of drugs. However, insurers and pharmacy benefit managers increasingly use **copay accumulator adjustment programs** to prevent such assistance from counting towards patient cost-sharing, such as their deductible or annual out-of-pocket maximum. In effect, the insurer gets to "double-dip" by demanding payment of out-of-pocket costs: first from copay assistance programs and then again from patients.

Copay accumulator adjustment programs do not just harm patients' pocketbooks; they undermine their access to life-saving prescription drugs, making it even more difficult for people living with ALS and other complex medical conditions to adhere to a treatment plan. With lower copays, consumers are less likely to skip taking their medications.

As one of the leading patient advocacy organizations in the nation, The ALS Association supports the prohibition of copay accumulator adjustment programs. We believe that *all patients* should be able to afford necessary treatments by ensuring *all payments* – made by or on behalf of the patients – are counted towards a patients' deductible and out-of-pocket maximums.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of this critical legislation. **For all these reasons, we respectfully ask for your support for HB 135, the Copay Accumulator Bill.**

Sincerely,

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cc: Senate Health Committee Members



OUR VISION: Create a world without ALS.

OUR MISSION: To discover treatments and a cure for ALS, and to serve, advocate for, and empower people affected by ALS to live their lives to the fullest.

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