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SUSIE NOVIS

IMF

February 15, 2010

The Honorable Joseph Crisco
Connecticut State Senate
Legislative Office Building
Room 2800
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

The Honorable Steve Fontana
Connecticut State Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Room 2802
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Crisco and Representative Fontana:

On behalf of the International Myeloma Foundation (IMF), the oldest and largest myeloma foundation dedicated to improving the quality of life of myeloma patients while working toward prevention and a cure, I am writing to show our strong support for SB 50, an act concerning oral chemotherapy treatments.

Myeloma is a cancer in the bone marrow affecting production of red cells, white cells, and stem cells. It is also called "multiple myeloma" because multiple areas of bone marrow may be involved. Myeloma is the second most common blood cancer after lymphomas affecting an estimated 750,000 people worldwide and its prevalence appears to be increasing significantly. In 2009, 20,580 Americans were diagnosed with myeloma and 10,580 lost their battle with this disease.

In the last few years we have seen dramatic and important advances in treatments for multiple myeloma. However, the needless disparity in coverage between oral drugs and intravenous chemotherapy is a critical issue for many of our patients. The IMF believes patients and their doctors should be able to take advantage of the treatment that is best for the patient, and not have to select their treatment based on insurance coverage. The IMF supports your legislation to eliminate these outdated cost inequities between oral and IV chemotherapy treatment that threaten patient care and quality of life.

The IMF stands ready to work with you and your colleagues to advance policies and support programs such as SB 50 that are necessary to the health and well-being of myeloma patients.

Sincerely,

Susie Novis

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