

FTR

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Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Room 2800, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Co-Chairman Joseph Crisco and Co-Chairman Robert Megna:

I am writing to you please ask you to, support Raised Bill 1083: *An Act Concerning Health Insurance Coverage of Prescription Drugs for Pain Treatment*. This bill would prohibit individual and group health insurance policies that provide coverage for prescription drugs from requiring insurers to use, prior to using a brand name prescription drug prescribed by a licensed physician for pain treatment, any alternative brand name prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs. Legislation such as this would help to alleviate the problem of unused (failed) pain medications building up in home medicine cabinets; potentially reduce the prescribing of opioids; potentially help to reduce/minimize health care expenditures; and minimize the suffering of patients and the administrative burdens for prescribers.

Step therapy (also referred to as fail-first) is one of many tools employed by health care payers to manage utilization of health care services. In the case of medications, the process usually requires a patient to try medicines for his or her conditions in a series of steps. While the goal of step therapy policies makes sense, the practical reality is often different.

- Step therapy policies can result in increased healthcare costs
- Step therapy policies contribute to the administrative burden in medical offices
- Step therapy policies often require patients to endure monetary, physical and psychological distress
- Step therapy policies may lead to the accumulation of unused medicines in home medicine cabinets

Step therapy policies override a treatment decision between a health care provider and a patient. Even when a health care provider thinks the treatment may not work, these policies can unnecessarily force patients to: pay cost-sharing for the first steps of therapy and for additional medical visits; suffer physically because effective treatment is delayed; and, tolerate side effects from inadequate medicines.

I respectfully urge you to support Raised Bill 1083.

Respectfully Submitted

Shelly Olivadoti

