



February 19, 2013 - Committee on INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE

SB 861 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MODERNIZATION OF CERTAIN MEDICAL FORMS.

Good Afternoon! Thank you for allowing me to be heard on the issue of prior authorization, and improving the access to medication for the millions of chronic pain sufferers.

I am Wendy Berggren Foster, Senior Advocacy Ambassador for US Pain Foundation.

US Pain Foundation was founded right here in CT, by a fellow pain sufferer. US Pain Foundation believes strongly in the importance of connecting, educating, informing, advocating, supporting, creating awareness and empowering those who share the feelings, frustrations, and daily challenges of living with pain. US Pain is dedicated to improving the lives of these individuals.

For over 20 years, I have dealt with the effect of an as yet undiagnosed neuromuscular disorder, which causes difficulty taking an adequate breath, poor balance leading to falls, chronic widespread severe pain throughout my body, and many medical appointments and testing. In addition, I suffer from what are called "Severe A-typical Migraines". These cause me to lose vision for periods as long as 24 hours, and excruciating pain. I also have several degenerative discs in my lumbar region, pressing into my spinal column, again massive pain.

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I am blessed to have my Service Dog by my side to pick things up which I may drop, help me up from a fall, empty my clothes dryer, help take my jacket off, open doors, press elevator buttons, and thankfully alert me to the onset of many of my migraines allowing me to take a medication in the hopes of heading it off. Unfortunately I am currently on day 7 of my most recent migraine. At these times merely having the company of my dog by my side is often the best medicine, as he helps to keep me calm and quiet.

Through all of this, there is still the issue of filling prescriptions. Often times, my physician will write me a prescription for a medication he believes can help. I then take the Prescription to the pharmacy only to get a call from them saying that this particular med requires prior authorization. Here the clock starts. The pharmacy must contact the doctor, who then must complete the necessary steps to obtain the prior authorization, while I continue to wait, with the same, if not worse, pain level. This can often take up to a week, sometimes longer.

Prior authorization requirements in particular cause patients living with pain to experience unnecessary delays in getting prescriptions filled. Often times, patients forego their medication rather than endure the wait, leading these patients to try other non-approved options which may result in adverse health issues down the road. CT residents and patients need to know that their health is a paramount issue with their legislators.



Electronic prior authorization has the potential to benefit Connecticut patients who live with chronic pain. First, it can replace the inefficient fragmented paper-based systems currently in use, improving patient access to medical services and prescriptions in a timelier manner. Second, electronic prior authorization can eliminate cumbersome administrative steps associated with paper based authorizations. Electronic prior authorization has the ability to free provider's resources from administrative tasks and allow them to be allocated directly to caring for their patient.

In closing, I would urge you to support SB 861, as it will not only expedite, but simplify the issue of obtaining Prior Authorization. As this Bill calls for *e (2) Any such forms shall (A) not to exceed two pages, (B) be available in paper format and electronic format, (C) be capable of being completed and submitted electronically, and (D) be consistent with existing prior authorization forms established by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and with any national standards pertaining to electronic prior authorization procedures", Thus creating a more uniform process.

SB 861 has the ability to decrease the time spent by physicians filling out numerous forms, and allow them to get back to the business of helping to heal their patients.

Thank You

