



Office of the
Healthcare
Advocate
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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**Testimony of Victoria Veltri
State Healthcare Advocate
Before the Insurance and Real Estate Committee
In support of SB 394
March 13, 2014**

Good afternoon, Representative Megna, Senator Crisco, Senator Kelly, Representative Sampson, and members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee. For the record, I am Vicki Veltri, State Healthcare Advocate with the Office Healthcare Advocate ("OHA"). OHA is an independent state agency with a three-fold mission: assuring managed care consumers have access to medically necessary healthcare; educating consumers about their rights and responsibilities under health insurance plans; and, informing you of problems consumers are facing in accessing care and proposing solutions to those problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 394, which addresses an important issue in healthcare delivery. As healthcare costs continue to rise, payors continue to seek means of minimizing expenditures, and the use of step therapy to ensure that cost effective treatments have been exhausted prior to approving alternate medication therapy is one tool to achieve that goal. However, while acknowledging payor's interest in reducing costs, SB 394 appropriately defers to the treating physician's clinical judgement. Although the 30 day requirement for payor preferred medication may delay the beginning of the prescribed course of treatment, this proposed legislation importantly enables the physician to independently make the determination whether the step therapy has had the desired and optimal clinical effect. More importantly, permitting physicians to override the 30 day step therapy requirement if, in their judgment, it would be ineffective or detrimental to the patient respects the physician's experience and clinical assessment.

As the only agency whose primary mission is to advocate for Connecticut's consumers healthcare needs, I thank you for providing me the opportunity to deliver OHA's testimony today. If you have any questions concerning my testimony, please feel free to contact me at victoria.veltri@ct.gov.

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