

Dear members of the committee considering SB 418,

My name is William J. Torres. I am a resident of Connecticut. It is my strong believe as an individual and as the CEO of a multinational business headquartered in this state that SB418 is critically important for the following reasons:

1. We care greatly about our employees. We want them treated equitably in all the states in which we operate. The current off label drug law in Connecticut is not on par with that of other states. We do not want a situation whereby our Connecticut employees get worse coverage under a medical plan because of an antiquated law.
2. If we want Connecticut to be a destination site for medical treatment, we need an updated law.
3. In many cases, the off label medication is no more expensive, and in fact may be less expensive, than other approved medications. This is based on the fact that many off label medications have been in the pipeline for a lengthy period. Many are even generics.
4. What I have come to learn is that a large number of medicines end up being used for purposes other than what they were developed for. Tamoxifen for example is viewed as a vitally important drug in fighting breast cancer. Its original development was in birth control. This happens constantly in the medical field. Let's have a law that reflects reality and encourages saving lives.
5. What we have now is an unfair playing field between insurance companies. Those companies that are patient focused look at current law and recognize that it is outdated and have developed a fair peer to peer review process where their in house physicians work reasonably with the physician attending the patient. But a less patient focused insurance company can use the existing law as a shield to deny any off label medication because of the outdated compendia. Do we not want to encourage the insurance companies that are treating patients with more equity rather than reward those that use the law as a shield solely for financial gain? Let's encourage the right behaviors.
6. It is my understanding that many other states have already adopted updated off label drug laws. Let's not be viewed as laggards. We will attract more business to Connecticut with an equitable approach.
7. As an individual, I have heard of the denials of off label drugs to patients who in desperate need of the medication. And it is in cases where there is clear evidence of potential effectiveness of using the medicine. In many cases, as I mentioned above, the medication is not more costly. The denial is not based on medically sound reasons. But the current law allows it to happen. That's not the kind of state I want Connecticut to be. Let's put fairness back in the process.
8. Let's get the decision making process on the prescription and coverage of off label drugs into the hands of trained physicians. Let there be true peer to peer review using a standard that is up to date and reflective of the broad applicability of many medicines.
9. It is not a mandate. It is simply a much improved review process.

I am very certain that you will see a strong ground swell for support of this bill from the constituents of Connecticut. We have just begun our letter writing and contact campaign and the initial support is outstanding.

Thank you for your attention to this critically important matter.

Sincerely

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