



March 4, 2016

State Senator Carlo Leone, Co-Chair
General Law Committee
Connecticut State Senate
Legislative Office Building, Room 3500
Hartford, CT 06106

State Representative David Baram, Co-Chair
General Law Committee
Connecticut State Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 3504
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Leone and Representative Baram:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation and our Connecticut affiliate, the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of RB 5434 which would help ensure timely access to epilepsy medications by exempting Schedule V non-opioid medications, which are epilepsy medications, from the state's drug monitoring program.

The Epilepsy Foundation, through our local affiliate, the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut, represents the more than 60,000 Connecticut residents living with epilepsy and seizures. Together we work to foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services.

Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. For people living with epilepsy, timely access to appropriate care and effective coverage for epilepsy medications is a critical concern, and epilepsy medications are the most common and most cost effective treatment for controlling and/or reducing seizures. To delay, change, limit, or deny access to medications could be extremely dangerous.

Individuals living with epilepsy who experience a delay in accessing their medication due to onerous drug monitoring requirements are at a high risk for developing breakthrough seizures and related complications. Delays also significantly increase medical costs related to preventable seizures, along with lost wages and productivity, not just for the individuals living with epilepsy, but also their families and communities.

Schedule V non-opioid medications do not pose the risk for abuse associated with medications in Schedules II-IV. As an organization that assists residents of Connecticut living with epilepsy, their families, and caregivers, we know how important it is that they gain and maintain access to medical care while maintaining the privacy of their medical history. We are not aware of any research to suggest people with epilepsy abuse their epilepsy medication. We do know firsthand the dramatic consequences of delaying or restricting access to epilepsy medications, which include breakthrough seizures, medical complications and expenses, and even death. RB 5434, which would exempt Schedule V non-opioid medications prescribed to people with epilepsy, is a simple way to ensure timely access to physician directed care while still addressing prescription drug abuse via the monitoring program.



The Epilepsy Foundation and Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of RB 5434, which would exempt Schedule V non-opioid medications and help those living with epilepsy in Connecticut. Please do not hesitate to contact Angela Ostrom, Chief Operations Officer and Vice President Public Policy, at 301-918-3766 or aostrom@efa.org with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Wallace".

Linda Wallace
Executive Director
Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip M. Gattone".

Philip M. Gattone, M.Ed
President & CEO
Epilepsy Foundation