

# RetireSafe

**Standing Up For America's Seniors!**

---

March 7, 2016

Senator Carlo Leone, Co-Chair  
Representative David Baram, Co-Chair  
General Law Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3500  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Support for SB 313

Dear Co-Chairman Leone, and Co-Chairman Baram,

As the President of RetireSafe, a nationwide non-partisan non-profit organization with more than 300,000 supporters (3,734 in Connecticut), I urge you to support SB 313, which includes a provision for prescriber communication. We find it essential that there is open communication between a prescribing physician and dispensing pharmacist in the event of a substitution of an interchangeable biologic, and this amendment supports this communication.

We have seen the significant impact biologic medicines have had in improving the quality of the health of Americans. To increase access to these important therapies, we have a vested interest in seeing biosimilar medicines introduced to the U.S. market. Lower cost medications mean more access and more lives saved. Yet we recognize the inherent safety challenges associated with this class of medicines and therefore, the issue of substitution has been a new challenge for policymakers, such as you. We fear that if safety issues are ignored as we begin this transition to biosimilars that health concerns will arise that will inhibit the trust in all biosimilars and delay the overall acceptance of biosimilars by healthcare professionals. We believe that when interchangeable biosimilar products are substituted, communication among patients, pharmacists and health care providers is essential to patient care and to establishing a trust in biosimilars.

Others have weighed in on the science behind this groundbreaking medicine and why biosimilars are unique. Because the medicine and its structure are complicated, from the perspective of the older Americans in Hawaii, it seems such a common sense requirement that the patient's physician be notified if a biosimilar is substituted by the pharmacist. A recent survey that we sent out nationwide on this issue received over 1,400 replies. Over 90% of those respondents thought that the communication between the doctor, the patient and the pharmacist should be open and required when a substitution is made concerning biologics, biosimilars and interchangeable biologics. Procedural inconvenience should not stand in the way of patient safety especially with the communication flexibility offered in this bill.

---

**1616 H Street NW, Suite 902, Washington D.C. 20006**

**[www.retiresafe.org](http://www.retiresafe.org)**

We know that you are concerned with patient safety and want to protect the citizens of Connecticut. It is because of that commitment to safety that we ask you to support SB 313, which includes prescriber communication.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thair Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and "P".

Thair Phillips,  
President/CEO, RetireSafe

CC: Members, House Health and Welfare Committee