

March 6, 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 Connecticut Senate Bill 313

Dear Chairman Leone and Chairman Baram,

On behalf of all women and men who have been adversely affected by prostate cancer, Women Against Prostate Cancer (WAPC) respectfully urges the Connecticut Senate General Law Committee to support SB 313, which includes language that requires communication between prescribers and pharmacists regarding biosimilars.

WAPC represents advocates, widows, healthcare professionals, and caregivers working together to bring an end to prostate cancer. As the organization that represents the caregivers for patients with prostate cancer, we have an equally vested interest in the advent of biosimilars and the legislation surrounding its safe uptake.

While this disease might only affect men physically, it also has a devastating impact on women - mothers, daughters, wives - in their daily lives. Biologics, and soon biosimilars, have revolutionized treatment options for those living with prostate cancer. As biosimilars are poised to enter the U.S. market it will expand access to the millions of men affected by prostate cancer.

However, Connecticut must prioritize patient safety as its chief concern, and recognize that a clear line of communication is the best way to achieve trust in biosimilars and safeguard patient safety. This applies to caretakers as much as patients. We are concerned about the possibility of biologic substitution without prescriber-pharmacist communication and how that will affect caretakers as well.

With biologics, we know that individual patients can respond differently to even seemingly insignificant changes in the manufacturing process, packaging, storage, or handling, which could cause unintended adverse effects. Treatment requires a great deal of clinical judgment from the prescribing physician, who carefully weighs the expected benefits and risks. The women of WAPC know first-hand the importance of having trust in their loved one's medical team. They oversee medical appointments, manage treatment options and navigate the health care system. They trust that the medications prescribed by physicians are being dispensed at the pharmacy setting and that any deviation would be communicated back to the prescribing physician. If a substitution was made by a pharmacist without the physician or the caretaker's knowledge, it could undermine the established relationship that is crucial to a patient's care.

We hope that you and your members of the Senate General Law Committee will support SB 313 as it has prescriber-pharmacist communication included in order to ensure patient safety for not only the patients living with prostate cancer but the women who are adversely affected as well.

Sincerely,

Theresa Morrow

Theresa Morrow
Vice President, Board of Directors
Women Against Prostate Cancer