

February 5, 2019

The Honorable Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson

Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care

900 Court St. NE, S-211, Salem Oregon 97301

Re: Advocacy and Provider Groups Urge Support of Senate Bill 139

Dear Chairwoman Monnes Anderson and members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

We, the undersigned, respectfully request that you to support Senate Bill 139 as it would ensure patients have timely access to the medically necessary and appropriate treatments they need.

Step therapy is an insurance cost-savings protocol that can cause negative outcomes for individuals living with a chronic disease or mental illness who rely on the treatment regimen recommended by their health care provider to manage their condition. By forcing a patient to fail first on a series of treatments before receiving the originally prescribed medication, both physicians and consumers are forced to compromise their treatment decisions in a way that is dangerous, time consuming and more expensive in the long-term.

Senate Bill 139 would permit a prescribing physician to request a step therapy override determination from a health plan or insurer on behalf of a patient to ensure the individual has the best treatment option available. Currently, Oregon residents are not protected by necessary safeguards and can suffer for weeks or even months before a decision is made by the insurer on whether a physician-approved treatment is authorized.

Oregon children and adults should not have to experience a delay in treatment, which may lead to health deterioration, additional emergency room visits and sometimes costly hospitalizations—all of which can increase overall costs to the state's health care system. By supporting Senate Bill 139, you are helping those residents living with complex conditions who rely on the treatment plan created between that individual and their clinician, not the insurer.

The undersigned groups thank you for your time in learning why Senate Bill 139 should be supported by the committee. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Shaina Smith of U.S. Pain Foundation at: shaina@uspainfoundation.org

Respectfully submitted,

Aimed Alliance

Alliance for Patient Access

Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

Crohn's & Colitis Foundation

Global Healthy Living Foundation

International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis

Lupus and Allied Diseases Association

National Infusion Center Association

U.S. Pain Foundation

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care