

February 25, 2019

House Committee on Health Care

To: Senator Salina, Chair and Committee Members

Re: **Support HB 2799**

Chairwoman Salina,

My name is Helen Russon and I live with Multiple Sclerosis in the Beaverton area. Multiple sclerosis (MS) is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. MS interrupts the flow of information within the brain, and between the brain and body. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. While each individual with MS is impacted differently by the disease, a growing body of evidence indicates that early and ongoing treatment with a disease modifying therapy (DMT) is the best way to modify the course of the disease, prevent the accumulation of disability, and protect the brain. Ongoing access to these medications is essential for people like me to be able to live their best lives.

This issue is of particular importance to me, as I am one of the approximately 5% of people with MS who have primary progressive MS. Up until recently, scientists were unable to manufacture a drug that could slow down disease progression in this type of MS. Finally, there is a new drug that has been shown to do this (Ocrevus), but the cost can be up to \$65,000.00 per treatment.

Thank you for all of your important work on the high prices of life saving medication and please **support HB 2799** out of the committee.

Sincerely,

Helen Russon  
Beaverton OR, 97008