



**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**

March 18, 2025

Senate Committee on Labor and Business
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SUPPORT SB 605 Credit Reporting Medical Debt

Committee members,

Thank you for your consideration of SB 605 which would ban medical debt credit reporting. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (Society) supports legislation which preserves or increases access to vital health services. The Society supports SB 605 which would prohibit the reporting of medical debts to credit agencies and consumer credit reports.

Background

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable disease of the central nervous system. Currently there is no cure. Symptoms vary from person to person and may include disabling fatigue, mobility challenges, cognitive changes, and vision issues. An estimated 1 million people live with MS in the United States. Early diagnosis and treatment are critical to minimize disability. Significant progress is being made to achieve a world free of MS.

Costs of Living with MS

People with MS have a variety of healthcare needs including but not limited to addressing neurological symptoms, emotional and psychological issues, rehabilitation therapies to improve and maintain function and independence, and long-term care. These needs vary dramatically from person to person and can change year on year as the disease progresses. Prescription medications, known as disease-modifying therapies (DMTs), are central to most treatment regimes.

MS is a highly expensive disease, with the average total cost of living with MS calculated at \$88,487 per year¹. MS may impact one's ability to work and can generate steep out-of-pocket costs related to medical care, rehabilitation, home & auto modifications, and more. For individuals with MS, medical costs are an average of \$65,612 more than for individuals who do not live with this disease. Disease-modifying treatments are the single largest component of these medical costs. As of July 2024, the median annual brand price of MS DMTs is more than \$107,000. Five out of seven of the DMTs that have been on the market for at least 13 years are priced over \$100,000 annually and continue to see regular price increases.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9109149/>



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Because of the chronic nature of the condition, people living with MS bear the financial burden of the disease for the duration of their lives. The high costs of living with MS can leave many affected by it at high risk for medical debt. When medical debt – often incurred through no fault of the individual’s own – negatively impacts a person’s credit score, it can have an extensive and long-lasting adverse impact on their financial security.

Support for Senate Bill 605

The Society strongly supports policies that minimize the impact of medical debt, including measures like Senate Bill 605 which prohibit consumer reporting agencies from making any consumer report with an adverse item of information that the agency knows or should know pertains to a medical debt.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for SB 605. Please contact me with any questions on the MS Society support.

Regards,
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