

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care, Human Services and Rural Health Policy,

American Transplant Foundation would like to thank the Chair, Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson, for giving Senate Bill 1570 a public hearing.

On behalf of our supporters nationwide, including transplant recipients, living organ donors, and transplant patient families, we urge passage of Senate Bill 1570's provisions to ensure the best outcomes for transplant recipients.

After receiving a transplant, a patient must take immunosuppressive drugs to ensure the body does not reject the new organ. It is critical that the patient's doctor be able to prescribe the best treatment and that coverage of the anti-rejection medication be guaranteed to minimize the risk that the organ will fail. Medicaid coverage should not prevent transplant recipients from receiving whatever treatment their doctors think is best. If the best options are more expensive, it still makes economic sense to cover those medications because the expenses associated with losing an organ transplant are typically much greater than the costs of medications.

In the case of kidney transplant recipients, lifetime coverage of immunosuppressive drugs costs about \$19,000 per year. But if a patient loses a kidney transplant, Medicare will guarantee lifetime dialysis treatment at a much higher cost of \$77,000 per year. It is best for patients - and cheapest - to allow doctors to prescribe the right drugs for treatment naive transplant patients under Medicaid. It will save lives and dollars.

Sincerely,

American Transplant Foundation

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