



March 20, 2017

Honorable Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair
Senate Committee on Health Care
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Senate Bill 237 - Support

Dear Senator Monnes Anderson,

The Arthritis Foundation urges your support of Senate Bill 237 when it comes before your committee. This bill requires that state-regulated health insurance plans must ensure that a pre-deductible copay is applied to the entire prescription drug benefit in at least 25% of individual and group plans offered in each service area and on each metal tier. This copay-only benefit design must be reasonably graduated and proportionately related across all tiers of the plan's formulary. If a carrier offers only one plan in a given metal level within a service area, that one plan must meet the requirements previously described.

High cost sharing, also known as co-insurance, is a barrier to medication access for people with chronic, disabling, and life threatening conditions. Cost-sharing for prescription medications should not be so burdensome that it restricts or interferes with access to necessary medications, which can lead to negative health outcomes and additional costs to the health care system.

Since many people with arthritis also suffer with chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart disease, their monthly medication expenditures to lead productive lives can include several types of medications. Accordingly, SB 237 would help to ensure Oregon patients have recourse other than going into severe debt to afford the medications necessary for them to work, parent and enjoy life.

On behalf of the more than 838,000 adults and 3,400 children living in Oregon with arthritis, the Arthritis Foundation strongly urges your support of SB 237 to ensure that patients have predictable and transparent access to treatment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Schultz".

Steven Schultz
Legislative Analyst
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sschultz@arthritis.org

cc:

Sen. Jeff Kruse, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Committee on Health Care