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February 15, 2017

Re: SB 526 (Kruse) – SUPPORT

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Global Healthy Living Foundation (GHLF) is a 501 (c)(3) patient organization that works to improve the quality of life for people with chronic disease, often focusing on those least able to advocate for themselves. We would welcome the opportunity to work with your committee to share the perspective of the chronically ill patients who we represent in Oregon, totaling more than 1,250 people with autoimmune diseases such as Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), many of whom rely on complex treatments to manage their disease.

GHLF supports SB 526, which seeks to require insurers to use strict clinical guidelines or peer-reviewed journals when imposing step therapy or fail first practices. This bill will protect our Oregon members, and indeed all Oregon citizens, with exceptions to the step therapy process, allowing patients to skip a preferred drug if it could cause an adverse event or is expected to be ineffective based on the known clinical characteristics.

The bill also protects patients from having to use a preferred drug if they have already tried and discontinued it due to lack of efficacy or adverse events under previous health care coverage. **This is a sensible bill that ensures the wellness of Oregon's most vulnerable citizens by protecting the individualized treatment decisions that are made between the provider and the patient**, while respecting the need to keep costs down.

We ask you to consider our members' wellness and the health of Oregon by supporting SB 526.

Respectfully,

Seth D. Ginsberg  
Co-Founder  
Global Healthy Living Foundation