



## ChronicDiseaseCoalition

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**The Honorable Laurie Monnes Anderson**  
**Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care**  
**900 Court St. NE**  
**Salem, Oregon 97301**

**February 20, 2017**

**Re: Chronic Disease Coalition Supports Senate Bill 526**

Dear Chairwoman Monnes Anderson and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

The Chronic Disease Coalition is a nonprofit organization in Portland, Oregon, dedicated to protecting the rights of chronic disease patients against discriminatory policies, practices and attitudes. A patient-advocacy organization, the Coalition works to ensure that those with chronic conditions, whether diabetes, kidney disease, MS, psoriasis, cancer or others, are able to access and receive appropriate medical treatment. Given the millions of Americans living with chronic and life-threatening diseases, the Chronic Disease Coalition urges you to support Senate Bill 526 and protect a patient's right to receive timely, individualized treatment decisions.

For chronic disease patients, step therapy prevents and delays these individuals from accessing vital care and timely medical treatment. A cost-saving mechanism for health insurance companies, step therapy forces patients to try cheaper treatments before they are allowed to try more expensive ones, even if their doctors are confident that the less expensive treatments will not help them.

These delays in treatment can severely harm chronic disease patients, underscoring Oregon's need to create additional patient safeguards. Rather than address patients' health care needs, step therapy denies coverage of proven and effective medical treatments, worsens a patient's condition and increases the overall costs to the health care system.

The Chronic Disease Coalition urges you to protect the well-being of those living with chronic and life-threatening illnesses by supporting Senate Bill 526.

Respectfully,  
**Scott Bruun**  
Executive Director  
Chronic Disease Coalition



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