

From the desk of Representative Andrea Salinas

Andrea Salinas

Myra's Story

Vote yes on HB 2658A

Myra Haq, a young, thirty-one year old woman living in Northeast Portland, is one of millions of Americans¹ who rely on prescription medications in their daily lives. Myra was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease, and unfortunately, getting healthy is not her only focus. Like too many others in our state and country, Myra not only worries about managing her chronic disease, she also worries about how to afford her care.



Humira is one of the main prescriptions used to treat Crohn's Disease. AbbVie, the maker of Humira, just raised their prices 9.7% in January. Last year, the company brought in \$13.6 billion in the US through Humira sales alone (\$19.6 billion globally)². Myra's medical costs exceeded \$300,000 during the time she was able to afford Humira.

Myra is now unable to afford Humira injections, and instead she must take four pills a day of Lialda. That treatment plan costs her \$1,181 before insurance. She also needs chemotherapy once a month to keep her symptoms at bay. While chemo helps Myra manage some symptoms, it also makes it difficult for her to maintain a full-time job and makes her more susceptible to being sick, forcing her to use up her sick-leave. Her chemotherapy costs \$14,000 annually, but soon Myra may need to switch to a more effective, but expensive type of therapy.

Pharmaceutical companies are turning billion-dollar profits off the backs of people like Myra. Due to the cost of her prescriptions, Crohn's disease not only affects Myra's health, it also affects her finances and her employment opportunities.

HB 2658A requires pharmaceutical companies to provide a 60-day notice when they are going to raise their prices. This will provide patients with valuable time to explore other treatment or payment options. Myra and other Oregonians deserve to focus on their health without worrying about a sudden price hike affecting their access to lifesaving prescriptions. Vote yes on HB 2658A to prioritize Myra and other Oregonians over the profits of pharmaceutical companies.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/drug-use-therapeutic.htm>

² <https://news.abbvie.com/news/abbvie-reports-full-year-and-fourth-quarter-2018-financial-results.htm>

4/17/19