

RE: SUPPORT – Senate Bill 192, Relating to Prescription Drugs

Good afternoon, Chair and members of the Committee.

I am Adam Zarrin, the Director of State Government Affairs for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® (LLS) is a global leader in the fight against cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world, provides free information and support services, and is the voice for all blood cancer patients seeking access to quality, affordable, coordinated care.

On behalf of blood cancer patients and their families, we testify in support of Senate Bill 192 relating to prescription drugs.

On average, blood cancer patients incur \$156,845 in total medical spending in the twelve months following diagnosis. Their average out-of-pocket spending was \$3,877 (depending on the specific diagnosis).¹

Out-of-pocket costs are a persistent challenge even years into remission.² Several studies show that cancer patients dig into or even deplete savings to pay for their care. Many go into debt due to the cost of their care and are 2.7 times more likely to file for bankruptcy. And these problems are worse for non-white individuals.³

High costs may force patients to delay or forgo treatment. 70% of commercially insured patients abandoned newly prescribed medication when they had to pay more than \$250 for treatment. About 11% of patients with out-of-pocket costs of less than \$30 left their prescriptions at the pharmacy.⁴

Patients depend on stable and affordable prices to start and keep their treatment.

Again, we thank the sponsors and appreciate the committee's time and consideration of this critical patient concern. And urge your support of Senate Bill 192.

Thank you.

¹ Milliman (2018) The Cost Burden of Cancer Care. *The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society*. Retrieved at: <https://www.lls.org/sites/default/files/Milliman%20study%20cost%20burden%20of%20blood%20cancer%20care.pdf>

² *ibid.*

³ Financial Toxicity and Cancer Treatment. National Cancer Institute. Updated September 20 2022. Retrieved at: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/managing-care/track-care-costs/financial-toxicity-hp-pdq>

⁴ K. Devane, K. Harris, and K. Kelly. (2018) Patient Affordability Part Two: Implications for Patient Behavior & Therapy Consumption. IQVIA. Retrieved at: <https://www.iqvia.com/-/media/iqvia/pdfs/us/us-location-site/market-access/patient-affordability-part-two---implications-for-patient-behavior-and-therapy-consumption.pdf>