



Testimony in support of SB 608-2A

May 8, 2023

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chair Goodwin, Vice-Chair Nelson and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of more than 1,700 family physicians and medical students in support of the -A2 amendment to Senate Bill 608, which will expand patient access to cost-sharing support through the removal of co-pay assistance limits.

Too many patients experience difficulties affording the medicines they need to manage their illnesses.

It makes sense to try to manage chronic conditions with generic or low-cost medications wherever possible, but for many patients, those are not an option. Insurers have many tools to manage pharmaceutical costs, including prior authorization, cost tiering within the medicines they cover, and step therapy requirements.

This legislation leaves many of those tools in place; it is structured such that the co-pay assistance limits would be removed when there is no generic equivalent for the medication, or if there is a generic option, the drug must be approved through an insurer's prior authorization process. In this way, we can be sure that patients with no other options will still be financially able to access medications.

There is much work yet to be done to address the high cost of medicines across the health system, and we look forward to engaging in that work. In the meantime, patients need continued access to relief such as that offered through the -2A amendment to SB 608, which helps ensure that their out-of-pocket expenses are manageable and build toward meeting their deductible, ensuring they have support in affording their medications throughout the plan year.

Thank you, and we are happy to discuss this legislation with any members of the committee.

Betsy Boyd-Flynn
Executive Director
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