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Baltimore County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee

Chair
Oversight Subcommittee on Personnel

House Chair
Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Chair
Baltimore County Delegation

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 27th, 2019

HB 1359 Health Insurance - Requirements for Establishing Step Therapy Protocol and Requesting Exceptions

Honorable Chair Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Peña-Melnyk, and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

I am happy to introduce to you HB 1359 Health Insurance - Requirements for Establishing Step Therapy Protocol and Requesting Exceptions. This bill reinforces exceptions for step therapy to protect patients from the harmful effects of being forced to fail first.

Step therapy is an insurance protocol requiring patients to try and fail on other medications before being granted access to covered treatment prescribed by a patient's doctor. It causes delays in access to necessary treatment, interferes with the doctor-patient relationship by placing prescribing power in the hands of the insurance company, rather than the doctor, and increases administrative burden for providers and their staff.

House Bill 1359 does not ban step therapy. Instead, it offers a moderate, compromised solution by placing reasonable regulatory restraints on step therapy. In 2014, this committee passed legislation directing the Maryland Health Care Commission to create benchmarks for establishing an online process for overriding step therapy protocols, and timelines for processing requests. This bill builds upon that success to strengthen those protections and bring Maryland's step therapy law in line with dozens of other states, including New York, Texas, Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, Georgia, and Maine.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1359 and would urge a favorable report,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Young".

Delegate Pat Young, 44B