

Miller Senate Office Building II Bladen Street, Room 422 Annapolis, Maryland 21401 410-841-3697 · 301-858-3697 800-492-7122 Ext. 3697

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter

In Favor of SB75- Insurance and Maryland Medical Assistance Program

- Treatment of Alopecia Areata - Coverage Requirements

Before the Finance Committee on March 15, 2023

Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

- SB75 requires Medicaid, subject to the limitations of the State budget, to provide coverage for (1) one hair prosthesis (wigs) for a Medicaid recipient whose hair loss results from alopecia areata, and (2) prescription drugs and medical devices approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of alopecia areata.
- The bill also expands the current mandated health insurance benefit for coverage for hair prostheses to include coverage for an enrollee or insured whose hair loss results from alopecia areata if the hair prosthesis is prescribed by the attending physician of the enrollee or insured.
- As the medical experts and other witnesses will explain, alopecia develops when the body attacks its own hair follicles, which can cause hair loss anywhere on the body. Most people develop it during childhood or their teenage years. Children

who suffer from alopecia areata have significant psychological distress with anxiety and depression being commonly diagnosed.

- Because hair loss caused by alopecia areata can greatly affect a person's quality of life (especially women) and treatment is beyond the financial reach of most people, requiring the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for hair prostheses, prescription drugs and approved medical devices is necessary for the treatment of alopecia areata.
- Insurance coverage of alopecia areata would give hope to patients, especially those living with widespread hair loss.

I therefore ask for a favorable report on SB75.

Sincerely,

Jill P. Carter, Esq.

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