



February 14, 2023

Maryland House Health and Government Operations Committee
Legislative Services Building
90 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 305

Dear Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

On behalf of the International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (AiArthritis), I encourage you to support HB 305 when it is before you in committee.

We are leaders in advancing education, advocacy, and research for those impacted by autoimmune and autoinflammatory arthritis (AiArthritis) diseases through peer-led guidance, collaboration, and resources that are driven by patient-identified issues and patient-infused solutions. As we are led by patients we well understand the importance of ensuring that healthcare providers can provide continuity of care to their patients, particularly when it comes to our medications.

HB305/SB308 will provide better continuity of care by requiring that health plans allow patients to remain on medications without further prior authorization, provided that the health plan covers the drug and the patient is stable on these medication. It will also allow that prescription drugs with dosage changes and generic switches remain authorized, thus allowing a seamless change with no delay. For many medications, even a few days without can have serious consequences for their disease. This bill will also ensure that coverage decisions are made by physicians not just licensed in the appropriate specialty, but knowledgeable in and experienced with the specific treatment. This is crucial to ensure that the best decisions are made.

Patients with Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis diseases are frequently prescribed medications that require a pre-authorization. Many plans require that every time a patient is sent the medication (typically every 4-8 weeks), a new pre-authorization is required. Not only does this pose a risk to the patient, but it also requires countless hours of paperwork on the part of the physician's office, the infusion center, and often the patient as well.

For these reasons, we urge you to continue to protect patients by voting YES on HB305.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Viscarra
Public Policy Manager
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis