

## **Favorable testimony for HB696 March 19, 2026**

I'm Kathlyn Miller. I have been helping retirees with Medicare for 20 years. I support passage of House Bill 696 with amendments to restore prescription benefits for Medicare-eligible State retirees who were hired before July 1, 2011.

I helped my parents sign up for Medicare Part D in fall of 2005 for a plan beginning in 2006. Dementia medication was expensive - with no cap. They could only afford medication for half the year. My mother joined a research study to gain access to medication. I understand how hard Medicare Part D is for seniors.

My friend was told by the pharmacy technician that she could use either her HRA card OR her Medicare card, but not both. She paid \$2,000 out-of-pocket instead of paying with her HRA card. I helped her get reimbursed by Via Benefits.

Another friend must place her husband with dementia in a facility so she can sleep at night, while he wanders. She worries whether his expensive medication will be covered by the pharmacy the facility uses. I helped her explore plans on [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).

Still another with cancer has medication supplied by his doctor. The HRA card is only to be used at pharmacies. He must pay first, then be reimbursed. The expensive medication meets the \$2,100 out-of-pocket cap in January.

My neighbor retired with breathing problems. He was covered by the State plan. His medication costs tripled under Part D. He spends \$2,100, now. He worries he will be prescribed a non-covered prescription drug. He is living on a fixed income of social security, a pension and a part time job, but must limit his income because he has not reached his Social Security full retirement age. There is no way for him to earn more to pay more.

All retirees hired before July 1, 2011 should have the HRA. Many retirees are in their 80s, 90s or more. There is no way for them to make up the funding they need for prescriptions.

My husband passed away last year. His medication was expensive. Ironically it was fortunate that we did not have to experience the hardship that others have endured.