

3/2/26

I, Alvin Carroll, am testifying in my capacity as a citizen.

Alvin Carroll spoke to us in support of Senate Bill 798 and agreed to have his name and words shared here today. He has Medicaid. Mr. Carroll stopped smoking in 2022 with the help of the nicotine patch and nicotine inhaler. The inhaler wasn't covered by his Medicaid plan so he participated in the Pfizer Patient Assistance Program, which sent him free Nicotrol inhalers. That program ended in 2023 and Mr. Carroll relied on the remaining Nicotrol, the Nicorette Inhalators (available in Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) from Kea Health, and lozenges which he said did not compare to Nicotrol but usually helped in a pinch. His dependence is very high and he has struggled to wean. In 2025, we had no more inhalers to give him. Mr. Carroll tried his best but relapsed about two months ago.

“I feel hurt that I did pick it up again. I thought I had this thing under control but the devil got me again. I...feel like I smoke too much. Smoking causes all kinds of cancer to the body. Everybody got different triggers. My trigger was that I like to have something to hold in my hand. I'm always trying to stay busy. When I wasn't smoking, my body was feeling good, I was picking up weight. Now my appetite is starting to act funny again. If insurance companies could just come up with something that meets people halfway, that'd be fine. These insurance companies are cutting a lot of stuff, including one of my medications that helps my appetite.

When my insurance wouldn't cover Nicotrol, I got real scared. Then Nicotrol was discontinued by Pfizer and it made me feel hurt, like I lost a best friend. It was like a stab in the back. I feel real disappointed. The inhaler kept me motivated, people was complimenting me! People would ask me how I quit. I said I went to the doctor, got some meds, and boom! When that worked for me, it made me feel so good. I don't want to keep smoking. I want to quit forever. I just hope and pray that something will come through for people that are really trying to quit smoking.”