



Dear Members of the Minnesota Federal Congressional Delegation:

We represent an expansive and diverse group of patients and health care providers in Minnesota who share a common goal of improving the health of patients across the country. Today we write to express our support for House Resolution 2077, the Restoring the Patient's Voice Act of 2017, which would ensure that patients with serious diseases, such as cancer, epilepsy, and diabetes, are able to access the medications they need without having to try another medicine and be forced to "fail first."

This practice, commonly referred to as "fail first" or "step therapy," is used by health insurers to force patients to try medications that insurance companies choose, requiring the patient to "fail first" before gaining access to the medicine originally prescribed by their health care provider. This insurance practice undermines a doctor's ability to appropriately treat patients with serious diseases and can greatly impede patient recovery.

Earlier this month, under bipartisan leadership in Minnesota, our state passed legislation to reform and limit this practice by health insurers, thereby helping to get the right medicines to patients faster.

In fact, Minnesota is not alone. More than a dozen other states have passed similar laws to limit or reform step therapy practices by health insurers, and many more are considering related legislation. Why? Because these step therapy practices are not limited by the state – the fail first protocols cross state borders and directly impact patients all across our country. And while these states are making great progress in protecting patients with state-regulated plans, more needs to be done at the federal level to close the gap for those Minnesotans on federally-regulated plans.

H.R. 2077, the Restoring the Patient's Voice Act of 2017, provides an opportunity for our elected leaders in Washington to address this issue through a bipartisan effort at the national level. It was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by two physicians, Congressman Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) and Congressman Raul Ruiz (D-CA), who understand the positive impact H.R. 2077 will have on improving the health and welfare of millions of patients across the country.

We ask for your support of H.R. 2077 as a fair and balanced way to put health care providers and patients back in charge of their health care. It is a common-sense solution that establishes reasonable reforms and limits on step therapy practices and ensures that a health care provider's professional judgment and a thorough review of a patient's history are part of a successful health care equation.

On behalf of our members, which includes patients, physicians, and other health care providers, we thank you for your review and consideration of H.R. 2077 and respectfully request your affirmative support.

Sincerely,

The Minnesota Step Therapy Coalition