April 8th, 2019

The Honorable David Howard
Chair, Senate Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Safety
1301 E 6th Ave
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Support HB 555- Ensuring transparency in prior authorization

Chair Howard and members of the Senate Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Safety,

The National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) is a non-profit organization with a mission to drive efforts to cure psoriatic disease and improve the lives of those affected. The NPF is the leading patient advocacy group for more than 8.3 million Americans and the roughly 26,584 Montana residents living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

I write to you today to express our support for HB 555 as amended.

As a systemic disease associated with life-altering symptoms, the timely treatment of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis is of the utmost importance when managing long-term patient health. An analysis focused on 12 medications used to treat plaque psoriasis, Crohn’s disease, and colitis found that between 2015 and 2016, employer plans increased the use of utilization review on these products from 18% to 60%. This is a 42% increase in just one year. Without proper guidelines, utilization review can limit a health care provider’s ability to tailor care to individual patient needs prolonging ineffective treatment and delaying access. This can result in increased disease activity, loss of function, possible irreversible progression of disability, and abandonment of treatment by the patient. HB 555 would reduce delays by ensuring providers have access to clinically based requirements for utilization review and a timely process for approval or denial of utilization review. This will help expedite the prior authorization process reducing administrative burdens for physicians, and ultimately, better serving patients.

HB 555 fine tunes the utilization review process and ensure it works for all stakeholders. For the psoriatic disease community this means higher treatment efficacy and a reduction in adverse reactions. We encourage the committee to report support HB 555 and ensure patients have access to a transparent and expedited process.

Thank you for your attention on this important matter and supporting better access to care for patients. If you have any questions, please reach out to Brittany Duffy-Goche with the National Psoriasis Foundation at bduffy-goche@psoriasis.org.

Sincerely,

Randy Beranek
President and CEO

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