May 13, 2019

Senator Cathy Osten, Chair
Representative Toni Walker, Chair
Joint Committee on Appropriations
300 Capitol Avenue Room 2700
Hartford, CT

RE: Support HB 6096 (Cook) – An Act Limiting Changes to Prescription Drug Formularies and Lists of Covered Services.

Dear Senator Osten and Representative Walker:

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. NPF is the leading patient advocacy group for more than 8 million Americans and roughly 91,972 Connecticut residents living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

I write to you today to express our support of your legislation HB 6096 relating to prescription drug formulary changes during a contract year. Individuals living with psoriatic disease ought to have predictability and certainty in their coverage when they choose a health care plan based on that plan’s offered benefits. Insurance policies which result in forced drug switching, treatment gaps, and cessation of effective therapy pose a danger to the patient in lost access to therapy, disease flares and adverse health effects.

The NPF is troubled that the number of individuals not treating their disease appropriately based on their severity of disease – currently 55% of individuals with psoriasis and 41% of individuals with psoriatic arthritis – may rise as individuals are forced to go off treatment. We urge both health insurance providers and pharmacy benefit managers to work with patients, providers, and employers to develop solutions to rising costs that will not negatively impact patient access to life-saving and life-preserving therapies.

Patients currently stable on a treatment should be able to remain on the prescribed treatment and should not be forced to change treatments for any non-medical reason. Forced switching of stable patients is both unethical and violates the standard of care. All treatment decisions should remain between the patient and prescribing provider.

We appreciate your attention on this important matter. Should you have any questions for NPF regarding this issue please contact Amy Prentice, Associate Director, State Government Relations at aprentice@psoriasis.org or 503-546-5551.

Sincerely,

Randy Beranek
President & CEO

CC: Members of the Joint Appropriations Committee