



Michigan Society of Hematology and Oncology
Advocacy • Education • Research

MEMORANDUM

To: Representative Gail Haines
Members of the House Health Policy Committee

From: Mary Malloy, CAE
MSHO Executive Director

Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Re: **Opposition to House Bill 4751**

It is with much regret that the Michigan Society of Hematology and Oncology must oppose HB 4751 as introduced. While we are pleased that the Chair has taken action on this issue, we must switch our position to one of opposition.

We believe that all stakeholders in cancer care should advocate for patients' access to the best scientifically supported treatment for a specific disease and health status regardless if the therapy is delivered intravenously or via an oral product. Having oral therapies relegated to high co-pay tiered benefits results in patients abandoning needed treatment. This issue must be addressed head on as more emerging treatments are coming to market in oral formulations.

The intent of this law furthers the cause of cancer treatment fairness but the insertion of language that allows "increased cost-sharing for all benefits" and affirms the payers' ability to impose "step therapy" to supersede the oncologists' determination of immediate clinical need could have unintended, but very damaging, consequences to the patients we serve.

When our organization appeared before you a few weeks ago in support of this important legislation we expressed our concern over the language contained on page 2, lines 19-26. At that time we were optimistic that substitute language would be considered that would resolve these concerns. This has not happened.

With the language currently contained in HB 4751, we cannot support this bill and respectfully request you to oppose this bill until it is clear that fair and equal treatment of all chemotherapy medicines can be achieved that does not jeopardize cancer patient protections already in place.