



The Honorable Kevin Cavanaugh
Chair, New Hampshire Senate Commerce Committee
107 North Main Street
State House Room 100
Concord, NH 03301

May 7, 2019

Dear Senator Cavanaugh,

On behalf of the 210 people with cystic fibrosis (CF) in New Hampshire, we are writing to express our opposition to HB 717-FN. While copay assistance is a short-sighted fix for systemic issues that face our health care system, solutions to address affordability and sustainability cannot come at the expense of patients' health and financial wellbeing.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-shortening genetic disease that requires individuals to take multiple therapies every day to address its manifestations. People with CF rely on meaningful health insurance to access high quality, specialized care that has dramatically improved length and quality of life. In the 1950s, people with CF were not expected to live to attend preschool but today more than half are adults. CF care is expensive, but we know the care model and treatments available today are helping people live longer, healthier lives. Unfortunately, many people with CF are faced with limited insurance options that preclude them from taking full advantage of advanced care and treatments.

Banning drug manufacturers from offering discounts to cover patients' insurance copayments and deductibles, as HB 717-FN proposes, would place additional financial strain on people with CF who are already struggling to afford their care. One out of four people with CF and their families paid more than \$10,000 in out-of-pocket expenses in 2017, not including premiums and deductibles. In order to make ends meet, 78 percent of people received some form of financial assistance to help pay for their care.

We understand the challenge insurers face in managing the rising cost of drugs, and that copay assistance programs mask bigger cost and affordability issues in the health care system. However, cost containment strategies that place a further burden on patients are unacceptable. The CF Foundation opposes efforts like HB 717-FN to ban third party assistance from counting toward copayments and deductibles, particularly for high needs individuals such as those with CF. Please vote "no" on HB 717-FN to protect people living with cystic fibrosis in New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary B. Dwight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "D".

Mary B. Dwight
Senior Vice President, Policy & Advocacy