



February 11, 2022

Senator Curtis VanderWall, Chair  
Senator John Bizon, Vice Chair  
Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee  
Binsfeld Office Building, Room 1100  
201 Townsend Street  
Lansing, MI 48933

RE: Request for a hearing on HB 4346: insulin OOP cap

Dear Chairman VanderWall and Vice Chairman Bizon:

On behalf of the approximately 1,150 people living with cystic fibrosis (CF) in Michigan, we write to express our support for HB 4346 and request that it be heard by the Health Policy and Human Services Committee as soon as possible. As the cost of prescription insulin has risen drastically over the past decade, so too have patients' out-of-pocket costs, which threaten access to care for those who depend on the medication. HB 4346, which would limit insulin copayments to \$50 per 30-day supply, will help ensure patients, including those with cystic fibrosis-related diabetes (CFRD), are able to afford this vital treatment.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that causes the body to produce thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and digestive system, which can lead to serious infections. CF affects the whole body and requires an intensive daily treatment regimen to address its many manifestations. Eighty-four percent of CF patients also have at least one health complication in addition to cystic fibrosis including CFRD, asthma, sinus disease, and others.

Cystic fibrosis-related diabetes is one of the most common complications experienced by people with CF, occurring in five percent of adolescents and nearly one in three adults living with CF. Due to the progressive nature of the disease, CF can cause scarring or "fibrosis" of the pancreas, which can lead to insulin deficiency and CFRD. As the name suggests, cystic fibrosis-related diabetes is unique to people with CF and, therefore, manifests and is treated differently than other forms of diabetes. However, like type-1 and type-2 diabetes, insulin is a crucial part of the treatment regimen – according to the 2019 Cystic Fibrosis Patient Registry, nearly three-quarters of CFRD patients require chronic insulin use, often several times per day.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, due to the high cost of insulin and other prescription drugs, many people with CF—even with the help of financial assistance—are forced to make difficult spending tradeoffs that can impact their health. According to a recent survey conducted by George Washington University of over 1,800 people living with CF and their families, nearly half of those surveyed reported delaying or forgoing care—including skipping medication doses, taking less medicine than prescribed, filling a prescription, or

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cff.org/Research/Researcher-Resources/Patient-Registry/2019-Patient-Registry-Annual-Data-Report.pdf>

skipping a treatment altogether—due to cost concerns. Those living with CFRD who do not have consistent access to insulin may be unable to properly manage their blood sugar levels, putting them at increased risk of irreversible damage, costly hospitalizations, and declining health outcomes.

The cost of insulin also places additional financial strain on patients who may already be struggling to afford their care. In the aforementioned survey, people with CF report having the most difficulty paying for prescription drugs compared to any other component of their health care. Further, more than 70 percent of people with CF said paying for health care has caused financial problems such as being contacted by a collection agency, filing for bankruptcy, experiencing difficulty paying for basic living expenses like rent and utilities, or taking a second job to make ends meet. Limiting copayments for insulin will help mitigate some of the financial burden that accompanies managing cystic fibrosis and CFRD.

We ask that HB 4346 be scheduled for the next available hearing and urge the Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee report out the bill as passed. By supporting this bill, you will help ensure continued access to prescription insulin for people living with CF. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation appreciates your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary B. Dwight", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Mary B. Dwight  
Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer  
Senior Vice President, Policy & Advocacy  
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation