Dear Legislator,

Now, more than ever, patients cannot afford delays in treatment. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania’s current prior authorization and step therapy processes can keep patients from receiving timely health care.

House Bill 1194 has been stalled in the Insurance Committee for the last year, while patients continue to face barriers to receiving life-saving treatment.

According to a national survey conducted by the American Medical Association, 92 percent of physicians report prior authorization delays can have a negative clinical impact on their patients. In that same survey, 78 percent of physicians reported that prior authorization delays can lead to patients abandoning their treatment.

The current one-size-fits-all approach to utilization management processes like prior authorization and step therapy undermines and burdens providers and patients and may lead to unnecessary delays and even denials of care. This can cause Pennsylvania patients’ health to deteriorate as they await authorization or are required to try and fail medications that we know do not or will not work for them.

A survey of more than 1,400 patients conducted by the Arthritis Foundation revealed that over half of all patients reported having to try two or more different drugs prior to getting the one their doctor had originally ordered. Step therapy was stopped in 39 percent of cases because the drugs were ineffective, and 20 percent of the time due to worsening conditions. Incredibly, nearly a quarter of patients who switched insurance providers were required to repeat step therapy with their new carrier.

The data is clear. Patients deserve timely access to care and yet across the board, providers are faced with prior authorization burdens and patients are faced with delays in treatment due to step therapy. There is currently no requirement that prior authorizations be determined in reasonable timeframes and no clear step therapy exemption process. The proposed legislation does not prohibit
insurers from using prior authorization or step therapy but rather makes the process much more transparent. This is fair legislation and it is more than overdue.

We urge you to support HB 1194.

Sincerely,

Pennsylvanians for Prior Authorization and Step Therapy Reform Coalition

Alliance for Pennsylvanians Patient Access
American Academy of Dermatology
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Cardiology, Pennsylvania Chapter
American College of Physicians, Pennsylvania Chapter
American Diabetes Association
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Arthritis Foundation - Western and Central Pennsylvania
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Community Liver Alliance – Pittsburgh
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation
Hypersomnia Foundation
Keystone Chapter of the of the American College of Surgeons
Lifesciences Pennsylvania
Mended Hearts - Pennsylvania
Mental Health Association in Pennsylvania
Metro Philadelphia Chapter of the American College of Surgeons
Multiple Sclerosis Society - Keystone
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Pennsylvania Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Pennsylvania Academy of Dermatology
Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians
Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology
Pennsylvania Academy of Otolaryngology
Pennsylvania Allergy and Asthma Association
Pennsylvania Association of Pathologists
Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Pennsylvania Medical Society
Pennsylvania Neurosurgical Society
Pennsylvania Orthopedic Society
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society
Pennsylvania Rheumatology Society
Pennsylvania Section, American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Pennsylvania Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine
Pennsylvania Society of Anesthesiologists
Pennsylvania Society of Gastroenterology
Pennsylvania Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates
Robert H. Ivy Pennsylvania Plastic Surgery Society
Susan G. Komen - Greater Pennsylvania
The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania