March 14, 2023

Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: ***Support biomarker testing legislation—the key to unlocking precision treatments.***

Dear Chairman Lampton and Members of the Ohio House Insurance Committee:

On behalf of all our organizations, we respectfully request that you support legislation to ensure that more Ohioans can benefit from biomarker testing—the key to unlocking targeted therapies. Specifically, we support House Bill 24, which will ensure Ohioans covered by state-regulated insurance plans, including Medicaid, have coverage for biomarker testing when medically appropriate. We appreciate you scheduling a first hearing on HB 24 on March 15, 2023, and hope that you will schedule another hearing on this bill soon.

Progress in improving cancer outcomes increasingly involves the use of precision medicine, which uses information about a person's own genes or proteins to prevent, diagnose, or treat diseases like cancer. Biomarker testing is an important step to accessing precision medicine which includes targeted therapies that can lead to improved survivorship, better quality of life, and reduce costs.

Biomarker testing is increasingly important for cancer care – and for the treatment of other diseases. Thirty-seven of the 62 oncology drugs launched in the past five years require or recommend biomarker testing prior to use.[i] Biomarker testing is increasingly important to enrolling patients in clinical trials as the number and percentage of cancer clinical trials that involve biomarkers has grown significantly.[ii]

Unfortunately, there is currently limited and disparate access to biomarker testing. A significant percentage of cancer patients and survivors do not receive biomarker testing because it is not covered by their insurer or the out-of-pocket costs would be too high. A recent study found that 78% of Ohioans are covered by plans that have

more restrictive coverage than what is recommended by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN) guidelines for several common cancers.[iii]

Not all communities are benefitting from the latest advancements in biomarker testing and precision medicine. Communities that have been marginalized including communities of color and individuals with lower socioeconomic status are less likely to receive biomarker testing.[iv] People in rural communities and those receiving care in nonacademic medical centers are also less likely to have access to biomarker testing.[v] [vi] Improving access to biomarker testing and thereby access to targeted therapies is also an important strategy to reduce health disparities and improve outcomes for cancer patients. Legislation to expand coverage of biomarker testing in Ohio would make it possible for more patients to get the right treatment at the right time. For these reasons we respectfully request that you support HB 24.

For more information or questions, please contact Leo Almeida at leo.almeida@cancer.org.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Ohio State Medical Association
Cleveland Clinic
The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio
Ohio Hospital Association
Ohio Association of Community Health Centers
Susan G. Komen
National Organization for Rare Disorders
Ohio Jewish Communities
Exon 20 Group
AdvaMed
Little Hercules Foundation
KRAS Kickers
Be the Match/ National Marrow Donor Program
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Ohio Urological Society
Ohio Hematology Oncology Society
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network
Triage Cancer
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation
American Kidney Fund
American Association of Clinical Urologists, Inc.
National Psoriasis Foundation
American Heart Association
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer
Ohio Nurses Association
American Lung Association in Ohio
Global Colon Cancer Association
Association for Clinical Oncology
Community Oncology Alliance
American Urological Association
Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute
Ohio Life Sciences
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Case Western Reserve University – Case Comprehensive Cancer Center
OhioHealth
Premier Health
Southeastern Ohio Regional Medical Center
UC Health
The Ohio Chapter of the American College of Surgeons

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[i] Global Oncology Trends 2021. IQVIA Institute; June 2021.

[ii] The Evolution of Biomarker Use in Clinical Trials for Cancer Treatment, https://www.personalizedmedicinecoalition.org/Userfiles/PMC-Corporate/file/The_Evolution_of_Biomarker_Use_in_Clinical_Trials_for_Cancer_Treatments.pdf

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