



**Written Testimony Against SB 341
Submitted to the House Health and Human Services Committee
March 10, 2016
By the Susan G. Komen® Kansas Affiliate**

Mr Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony against SB 341, which would allow the use of step therapy protocols for Medicaid patients. My name is Peggy Johnson, and I am the Chair of the Public Policy and Mission Advisory Council for the Susan G. Komen® Kansas Affiliate.

Susan G. Komen® believes health decisions should be made between a patient and their doctor. These decisions depend on many factors such as age, type of cancer and the characteristics of the disease. Deciding on a particular treatment option is as much a personal matter as it is a medical one. Treatment decisions should not be constrained by financial factors. People who are fighting cancer should have the opportunity to choose the best therapy without the burden of overly restrictive cost containment policies.

Step therapy, also referred to as “fail first”, requires a patient to first try a preferred (often generic alternative) drug prior to receiving coverage for the originally prescribed drug. Step therapy is a method of utilization management employed to control costs by beginning treatment with a more cost-effective drug therapy (often not as effective) and then progressing to the newer, more costly treatments only if necessary.

By preventing patients from receiving the most effective treatment first, their treatment plan can be further compromised, which studies have shown often *result in much higher healthcare costs*. In plans that currently utilize these protocols, it has been found that *53 percent of patients* whose oncology medications were rejected because they did not meet step therapy requirements did not receive another drug within the recommended 30-day window. Timing of treatment is very important in the treatment of cancer. Women diagnosed with breast cancer should not be forced to delay treatments when we know that breast cancer becomes five times more expensive to treat once it has spread beyond the breast.

To ensure patients and their physicians can choose the most appropriate and effective course of treatment for them, Susan G. Komen Kansas advocates **against** policies that increase insurance barriers precluding physician decision making, and placing unnecessary burdens on accessing care, including step therapy protocols.

The Komen Kansas Affiliate has long been committed to the fight against breast cancer right here in Kansas. **As committed partners in the fight against breast cancer, we know how deeply important it is for all cancer patients to have fair and equal access to the therapies that may save their lives. As such, Komen Kansas opposes SB 341 and we urge you to vote against this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.**

**Susan G Komen Kansas Affiliate
Chair – Public Policy and Mission Advisory Council**

HOUSE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

DATE:

ATTACHMENT 10