



January 22, 2017

Re: HB 2107—Inclusion of Biological Products in the Pharmacy Act of the State of Kansas

Dear Members, House Health and Human Services Committee,

All over the country, state legislatures are considering legislation, and many have already passed bills, to ensure that their residents have access to interchangeable biological products and biosimilars. We are at the beginning of a new age of biological therapies, and laws and regulations must reflect this new reality.

House Bill 2107 is an excellent example of legislation that does just that.

ICAN, the International Cancer Advocacy Network, is in strong support of HB 2107 because of its patient safety protections when dispensing biosimilars and interchangeable biological products. ICAN, a five-star rated 501(c)(3) charitable cancer patient advocacy organization, helps late-stage cancer patients in Kansas and throughout the country. We deal daily with biologic therapies for our U.S. patients, and for our patients in 54 countries. Biologic therapies, and thus interchangeable biological products, will become a growing area for metastatic cancer patients.

This is a particularly timely issue given the first approval of a biosimilar in the United States in 2015, and the expected approval of many more in the future. HB 2107 ensures that when an FDA-approved, lower-cost, interchangeable biological product is substituted by a pharmacist for a brand-name biologic, records will be kept, and the pharmacist will communicate to the patient and prescribing physician the precise drug that was dispensed—thus ensuring patient safety.

Communication to the patient and physician is essential because, unlike generic drugs that are an exact copy, the interchangeable biological product can be slightly different due to manufacture, transportation, or handling. If a patient experiences any adverse reactions, a physician needs to know all possible causes, including and especially, that the patient received an interchangeable biological product. Failing to communicate to the patient and physician when a substitution is made is an unnecessary risk to patient safety.

While we acknowledge (and welcome) the economic impact on healthcare of interchangeable biological products, patient safety can easily be protected by requiring communication to the patient and physician. Because of their complexity, size, and sensitivity, all biologics—whether reference, biosimilar, or interchangeable biological products—have potential for unintended induction of potent, immunologic reactions. Each and every patient may respond differently to any biologic, depending on their individual genetics and immunologic status.

Your support for HB 2107 throughout the legislative process is a powerful voice for the safety of ICAN's Kansas patients, and for all Kansas patients. It is also supporting well-crafted legislation that can serve as a model for other states.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at marcia@askican.org, or at (602) 618-0183 if you need additional information.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marcia K. Horn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marcia" being the most prominent part.

Marcia K. Horn, J.D.
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