

Testimony for House Bill 2598

House Insurance Committee

Shannon Buss

February 17th, 2020

Chairman Vickrey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Shannon Buss and my husband's name is Thane. We own a family farm outside of Oxford, Kansas and currently find our insurance on the marketplace. Each year I spend hours searching for an insurance that will cover a drug that my husband must take to control his cholesterol. He has familial hypercholesterolemia that was diagnosed several years ago after he failed several treatments to reduce his cholesterol. Praluent was a God send to us. He hasn't had any issues with his cholesterol levels since starting this drug. Unfortunately we had to switch insurance this year because our youngest son was diagnosed with Autism. The BlueCross plan we had didn't cover Autism treatment for children under 12 and we knew he would be so much more successful if we started therapy immediately. You can't ever really know if the Praluent is covered because it just says PA required and a \$250 copay but we have been down that road before and he is clearly benefiting from it (before medication he had an LDL well over 300 now it is under 200). We settled on an insurance and when we went to fill the medication, it was denied because it required a prior authorization. The pharmacist sent the prior authorization request to our local family physician and he filled in the necessary information and sent into the PBM. The PBM denied the prior authorization stating that my husband had to be seen by a cardiologist even though he has been taking this for years now! It is very challenging to get an appointment with my husband's work schedule (he is really only off when it is raining!) as well as the distance to a cardiologist but we finally got him seen by one. He did the required testing and our cardiologist submitted another PA. Denied. Our pharmacist and physicians are still fighting with the PBM trying to get them to cover this drug meanwhile we are having to pay out of pocket every month for this expensive medication. This medication is preventing my husband from having a stroke or a heart attack and it is being denied for no explainable reason. To me this is the opposite of what healthcare is supposed to look like. We greatly support HB 2598