

STATEMENT OF LARRIE ANN BROWN
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SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE
ORAL TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF 2019 SB 93
FEBRUARY 25, 2019

Mr. Chair and members of the committee. I am Larrie Ann Brown, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments to you in opposition of SB 93 which mandates procedures PBM's and health plans must use regarding step therapy procedures.

As you may have heard Cigna, a leading global health service company, successfully completed its merger with Express Scripts Holding Company ("Express Scripts") effective December 20, 2018. Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service company dedicated to improving the health, well-being and peace of mind for those we serve. All products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Life Insurance Company of North America, Cigna Life Insurance Company of New York, Express Scripts companies or their affiliates. Such products and services include an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, supplemental benefits, and other related products including group life, accident and disability insurance.

Health plans and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) rely on several methods to encourage enrollees to use therapeutically equivalent drugs, when appropriate, to enhance safety, reduce drug misuse or overuse, improve quality, and control costs. One method known as "step therapy" requires an enrollee to try a medically appropriate first- line drug, typically a generic alternative to a branded product, when a therapy is initiated.

Step therapy programs encourage safe and cost-effective medication use. A higher cost does not necessarily mean a drug is better. For example, a brand drug may have a less-expensive generic or brand alternative that might be a good option for the patient. Generic and brand drugs must meet the same standards set by the U.S. FDA for safety and effectiveness. These policies help ensure that medications are properly and safely prescribed to health plan members while reducing costs for employers and members.

Many drugs have harmful side effects or interact adversely with other medications: step therapy encourages trying safer, alternative therapies first. Drugs with a high risk of abuse or overuse, such as pain medications or antipsychotics, are good candidates for step therapy to encourage the use of safer, first-line medically appropriate therapies. Step therapy ensures that prescribers consider the medically appropriate available therapeutic alternatives before settling on a course of therapy for a specific patient, which can improve quality of care when that patient is on multiple medications or is elderly.

There are parts of this bill we are neutral on but others we do not support. We do believe this bill creates a new health insurance mandate and should follow the same laws as other proposed new mandates. (KSA 40-2248-49 and 2249a) which require a cost impact study be done by the proponents before any new mandate may be considered and that any proposed new mandate must first be tested on the state employee health plan in order to carefully consider the cost and possible benefits associated with a proposed mandate before passing it along to the private market.

We respectfully request the committee oppose SB 93. Thank you for your consideration.