



February 8, 2022

Representative Zack Stephenson, Chair
Representative Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health Finance and Policy
Minnesota Legislature
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Chair Stephenson, Vice Chair Kotyza-Witthuhn, and Members of the Committee,

The Minnesota Society Clinical Oncology Society (MSCO) and the Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) are pleased to support **HF 633: Individual and Small Group Health Plan Offerings to Include a Predeductible Flat Co-Payment on Prescription Drugs**. Committee passage of HF 633 would be a crucial step in helping protect Minnesota patients with cancer from the burdensome out of pocket costs associated with specialty drugs.

MSCO is a professional organization whose mission is to facilitate improvements for Minnesota physician specialties in both hematology and oncology. MSCO members are a community of hematologists, oncologists, and other physicians who specialize in cancer care. ASCO is a national organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With nearly 45,000 members, our core mission is to ensure that cancer patients have meaningful access to high quality, equitable cancer care.

MSCO and ASCO are committed to supporting policies that reduce cost while preserving quality of cancer care; however, it is important that these policies are developed and implemented in a way that does not undermine patient access. This bill does just that by addressing a key issue for cancer patients – high cost-sharing requirements such as upfront deductibles and monthly coinsurance – in a minimally disruptive way to the payor. High costs can prevent patients from filling prescriptions, which can result in patients deciding to forego medication. If a patient does forego care, this decision will lead to poorer health outcomes and higher overall costs to the health care system.

HF 633 shields patients from having to make large, often unaffordable lump-sum payments at the beginning or end of the plan year by spreading costs throughout. MSCO and ASCO are encouraged by the steps that HF 633 takes to help alleviate the out-of-pocket cost burden for patients, and we therefore urge the committee to support the measure. Please contact Sarah Lanford at ASCO at sarah.lanford@asco.org or Betsy Spruill at MSCO at BSpruill@accc-cancer.org if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Samith Kochuparambil".

Samith Kochuparambil, MD
President
Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Howard A. Burris III".

Howard A. Burris III, MD, FACP, FASCO
Chairman of the Board
Association for Clinical Oncology