



August 26, 2011

The Honorable Brian Higgins
US House of Representatives
2459 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Higgins:

On behalf of the Patients Equal Access Coalition (PEAC), we are writing to thank you for introducing HR 2746, the ***Cancer Drug Coverage Parity Act of 2011***. PEAC is a patient focused coalition whose mission is to ensure that cancer patients have equality of access (and equality of insurance coverage) to all approved anticancer regimens including, but not limited to oral and intravenous drugs, injections, surgery, radiation, transplantation, etc.

Insurance coverage has lagged behind the rapid growth in oral anti-cancer medications. As oral cancer treatments have become more readily available and the standard of care in many cases, the coverage structure has not adapted to address these changes. Cost-sharing imposed by health insurance plans is intended to sensitize patients to the financial consequences of their choices and encourage patients and physicians to choose less expensive and generic drugs. However, the strategy of using cost-sharing to help patients make good, cost-effective choices doesn't work as intended when dealing with anti-cancer medications, where options are limited. Decisions should be based on what is considered the most effective treatment in these cases, not just what is the most affordable.

This legislation is critical to the cancer community and we applaud your ongoing commitment to eliminating disparities for patients whose insurance coverage has differences in the way oral and intravenous chemotherapy therapies are covered. Thank you again for your leadership on this crucial issue facing cancer patients. If PEAC can be of any assistance to you or your staff in the future, please don't hesitate to contact the organizations listed below.

Sincerely,

Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation
Fight Colorectal Cancer
International Myeloma Foundation
Lymphoma Foundation of America
Lymphoma Research Foundation
National Brain Tumor Society

National Organization of Rare Diseases
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Patients Against Lymphoma
Roswell Park Cancer Center
The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society