

Hello Honorable Delegates,

My name is Irvin Varkonyi. I am a 73 year old retiree, living in Fairfax County. For the last couple of decades, I have had to deal with increasingly severe psoriasis. The most effective medication has been Skyrizi, which I have been taking for about five years. While I was covered by private insurance, my copays were \$5 per injection, taken four times per year. Once I went on Medicare, my copays were around \$5,000 per year with significant increases the past two years, until my copays reached \$8,000 in 2023.

While I am fortunate that I am covered for much of the cost by Medicare, others who must take this medication and who do not have private insurance and are not on Medicare must pay tens of thousands of dollars, per year even if the manufacturer, AbbVie, provides some financial relief. This is unacceptable just because Skyrizi's patent prevents competition.

You, representing the citizens of Virginia can help Virginians by capping the price of drugs like Skyrizi. HB 570, establishing the Prescription Drug Advisory Board, patroned by Del Delaney, can bring incredible relief from financial and medical uncertainty for Virginians who must take such expensive medications. Virginians who do not have private insurance and even Virginians who do whose copays may be as outrageous as mine will benefit. All of us in Virginia, who are on Medicare, will be seeing some relief, from the Biden Administration's Inflation Reduction Act which is lowering Medicare copays this year and in 2025. But for Virginians not on Medicare, HB570, if passed into law, will greatly protect their pocketbooks as the IRA is protecting mine when we must take effective but extremely expensive prescription drugs. Many of your family members, though not your parents, will benefit by HB 570 being signed into law.

As a taxpayer, I will also be pleased that the Commonwealth will save taxpayers money, since HB 570's upper price limit cap will mean lower costs when it pays for drugs for those on Medicaid, those covered by state health insurance plans, inmates and others. The cost savings will be in the millions, allowing the General Assembly and the Governor to share in a victory for taxpayers.

Thank you.

Irvin Varkonyi

Fairfax, VA

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