



# Virginia Cancer INSTITUTE

PERSONAL ATTENTION & LEADING-EDGE CARE SINCE 1981

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January 31, 2023

The Honorable Michael Webert  
Chair, Subcommittee #2  
House Commerce and Energy Committee  
1000 Bank Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Support for House Bill 1782 ensuring fairness in cost-sharing

Chair Webert,

On behalf of Virginia Cancer Institute, we would like to thank the House Commerce and Energy Subcommittee #2 for considering House Bill 1782 and the impact of cost-sharing as it relates to a patient's access to medication.

Virginia Cancer Institute is a community oncology practice that has served Virginians living with cancer for the past 41 years and we are proud to continue to provide care today throughout Greater Richmond. Community oncology clinics like VCI deliver high-quality cancer care often at a fraction of the cost of treatment delivered in other settings. For instance, in recent years, the Journal of Clinical Oncology found that breast cancer patients save nearly \$8,000 in cost per month for treatment at a community oncology practice compared to patients in a hospital setting.

While VCI strives to provide patients with low-cost care each and every day, many of our patients continue to face obstacles to treatment through the profiteering practices instituted by pharmacy benefit managers (PBM). One such practice is the diversion of prescription rebates toward PBM profits and away from patient savings. Currently a 90-year-old patient of ours is experiencing an extreme financial hardship for his \$3,229 per month oncology medication. Unfortunately, his income is just barely over the income limits for outside support and each month he is forced to make some tough financial decisions. If passed on to patients, these rebates would provide significant savings at the pharmacy counter and would greatly reduce unnecessary burden.

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Our patients and their families are placed in unimaginable circumstances, facing life-altering decisions every day. As a community oncology practice, we aim to reduce the burden of their illness by providing quality cancer care and advocating on their behalf. We ask the committee to assist us in this fight and pass HB 1782.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pablo Gonzalez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pablo Gonzalez, MD  
President  
Virginia Cancer Institute