



April 5, 2023

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
Chairwoman, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8530
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 70 (Wiener) Prescription drug coverage – Support

Dear Chairwoman Eggman,

On behalf of the California State Association of Psychiatrists (CSAP), I write to you in support of SB 70, which would strengthen patient stability and wellbeing by expanding California’s prohibition on non-medical switching to include when a provider prescribes a new dose or dosage form of the same drug.

Many Californians who suffer from a chronic disease or illness rely on prescription medications to survive and live functional lives. Under current law, health care plans cannot force patients to switch medication for non-medical reasons, such as financial incentives. However, this does not apply to the dose or dosage form of the same drug. This is particularly dangerous to those patients who rely on drug infusions, and when the efficacy of the drug largely depends on the dose. To further complicate matters, when insurance companies deny coverage of a medication or at a different dosage, despite healthcare providers deeming medication vital to the patient’s health, patients risk hospitalization and even death.

If insurance companies continue to be allowed to deny prescribed changes in dosage levels, chronically ill patients will be unable to receive the critical treatment they need. Limiting access to medically necessary drugs and drug dosage is not adequate and does not represent quality care.

Therefore, SB 70 will protect patients by ensuring that the prescribed dose or dose level of the previously approved drug is protected under non-medical switching law. Simply put, passage of SB 70 would help to ensure continuity of care and prioritize the safety of those living with chronic illnesses.

For these reasons, CSAP is pleased to support SB 70.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yoder', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Paul Yoder
Legislative Advocate

CC: Members, Senate Health Committee
Senator Scott Wiener