

November 2, 2020

Honorable Representative Aaron Michelwitz
Honorable Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Honorable Representative Donald Wong
Honorable Senator Michael Rodrigues
Honorable Senator Eric Lesser
Honorable Senator Patrick O'Connor
Members, Conference Committee
Massachusetts General Court
Boston, MA

RE: House Bill 4879

Dear Members of the Conference Committee,

The Arthritis Foundation urges your support of House Bill 4879, specifically the section of the bill that will ensure that patients have access to manufacturer copayment assistance for their medications.

Currently, patients have been left with very high out of pocket expenses for their medications. Many patients with chronic and rare diseases, such as arthritis, depend on copayment assistance programs to be able to afford their specialty medications. There is a direct correlation between patient cost and treatment adherence: as out-of-pocket costs increase, so do prescription abandonment rates. A recent study clearly showed that when patient costs hit the \$250 mark, over 70% of new patients walk away from the pharmacy empty handed.¹ Further, the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission has found that this type of assistance help patients adhere to their treatment plan. Lack of adherence to important medications can lead to negative health outcomes and additional costs to the health care system.

The current need for this legislation dates to 2012, when the Massachusetts' legislature enacted a law allowing for the use of manufacturer assistance. The bill was passed with a sunset provision, which has repeatedly been extended but is due to expire on January 1, 2021. Without passing the provision within H4879, patient's will no longer be able to depend on their copayment assistance to afford their medications.

On behalf of the more than 1.3 million people living in Massachusetts with doctor-diagnosed arthritis, the Arthritis Foundation strongly urges your support of H4879.

¹ IQVIA. May 2019. [Medicine Use and Spending in the US; A Review of 2018 outlook to 2023](#)

Sincerely,



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