April 24, 2018

Senator Pat Spearman  
Chair, Interim Committee on Health Care  
401 S. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

RE: Supporting innovative efforts to aid in high out-of-pocket costs for chronic disease patients

Chair Spearman and Members of the Interim Committee on Health Care:

The National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) is a non-profit organization with a mission to drive efforts to cure psoriatic disease and improve the lives of those affected. The National Psoriasis Foundation is the leading patient advocacy group for more than 8.3 million Americans and the roughly 104,930 Nevada residents living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. Due to the heterogeneity of psoriatic diseases, a patient’s access to coverage needs predictability and certainty from their insurance plan. Last session our coalition advocated for SB 436 that addressed discriminatory health insurance design by restricting treatment access and high patient out-of-pocket costs. I encourage your committee to consider legislation that will aid patients who face crippling out-of-pocket costs when accessing and maintaining treatment.

People with psoriasis have significantly higher healthcare resource utilization and costs than the general population. High out-of-pocket costs significantly impacts a patient’s access to care. A 2017 study of data collected from NPF surveys found that although roughly 89% of patients with psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis were covered by insurance, over half spend more than $2,400 per year in out-of-pocket costs for their disease. In fact, 39% of patients spend more than $200 per month toward cost-sharing obligations. When facing high out-of-pocket costs, patients do not use their medications appropriately; skipping doses in order to save money or abandoning treatment altogether. This lack of access for a patient with psoriatic disease is detrimental to their health, including the loss of treatment options due to reduced efficacy of a therapy.

The coalition encourages legislation that would ensure at least 25% of health plans offered within each metal level utilize reasonably graduated copay-only cost-sharing structure for prescription drug formularies. Flat dollar amounts, rather than co-insurance requirements, for critical treatments lower and thus more manageable for the patient population. Requiring copays to be graduated from one formulary tier to the next can help maintain costs and help a patient financially plan their treatment costs.

People with substantial prescription drug needs – especially those living with chronic conditions such as psoriasis – must have access to prescription drug coverage and understand their out-of-pocket costs. The National Psoriasis Foundation encourages the committee to consider this concept to help ensure better access to care for chronic disease patients.

Sincerely,

Randy Beranek  
President and CEO