February 1, 2018

Senator Clemente Sanchez
Chair, Senate Corporate & Transportation Committee
490 Old Sante Fe Trail
Sante Fe, NM 87501

RE: Support SB 11 – Guidelines for Step Therapy for Drug Coverage

Dear Chair Sanchez:

The National Psoriasis Foundation (NPF) is a non-profit, voluntary health agency dedicated to curing psoriatic disease and improving the lives of those affected. The Psoriasis Foundation is the leading patient advocacy group for the 8.3 million Americans and 72,835 New Mexican residents living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis.

Step therapy, also known as ‘fail first’, is a health insurance mandate that restricts spending on prescription drugs. This tool requires patients to ‘fail first’, often multiple times, on certain medications before they are able to receive the treatment originally prescribed by their physician. All too often, this delays access to optimal therapy, while potentially exacerbating a patient’s condition.

As a systemic disease associated with life-altering symptoms, the timely treatment of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis is of the utmost importance when managing long-term patient health. The Medical Board of the National Psoriasis Foundation recognizes the insurance companies’ need to keep costs down. However, the best interests of the patient must be the priority for both physicians and insurers alike.

The legislation before you ensures that step therapy is based on the most current clinical data and that it is available to the consumer in a transparent manner. Furthermore, it provides a timeline for a response to the request based upon language agreed upon in other states. Finally, it outlines clear and concise exceptions to the step therapy protocols based on medical necessity. This legislation, which is not a ban, strikes a fair balance between cost containment and health of the patient.

When considering SB 11 we ask that you report this measure favorably.

Sincerely,

Randy Beranek, President and CEO