



February 13, 2015

Dear Representative Scott Schwab and Committee Members,

On behalf of Balls Food Stores – Hen House and Price Chopper Pharmacies in the Kansas City metropolitan area, I write this letter to encourage you to pass the prescription drug fill and refills legislation, HB 2176. This bill would allow Kansas residents to work with their community pharmacist to synchronize their prescription medications. Medication synchronization can improve adherence by 22-24% across a range of chronic conditions. What may seem like a simple issue has tremendous benefits to the health of thousands of patients suffering from costly diseases like diabetes, heart failure, and COPD among many others.

Providing the option for medication synchronization is not only convenient for the patient by limiting trips to the pharmacy, but it has also proven to increase medication adherence which has long-term benefits of improved health outcomes and, potentially, lowering overall healthcare costs. As a practicing community pharmacist, I have seen firsthand the impressive impact of this service. Our pharmacies currently provide medication synchronization services to over 1200 Kansas residents. Patients get their questions answered regarding proper usage and adverse side effects at their monthly medication appointment where pharmacists work to remove patient barriers to adherence. These patients now take their medications daily as prescribed and many of them share stories with us about improvement in markers of their chronic disease like control of their blood sugar or blood pressure levels.

From the pharmacy's perspective, it is incredibly important to remove as many barriers to medication synchronization as possible. When attempting to synchronize a patient's medications, some prescriptions are deemed "refill too soon" by the insurer. Another common barrier is that patients are often charged a full month's co pay for just a partial fill to synchronize their medications. We must work to remove these barriers. Medicare Part D has made changes to allow medication synchronization. Beginning in 2014, CMS took a meaningful step forward in its commitment to improving medication adherence by making it easier for patients to have their prescription medications synchronized. Let's take a similar step by passing this bill in Kansas.

HB 2176 makes medication synchronization voluntary for any patient, practitioner and pharmacist, while also ensuring that anyone seeking to have their medication synchronized cannot be denied by a health plan. This makes it much more likely that patients will stick to their prescription schedule. Medication synchronization provides a simple, common sense approach to improving the health and well-being of people with chronic illness and for those who care for them. We must strive to protect residents of Kansas from delays and administrative barriers that undermine access to timely treatment. I truly appreciate you doing your part to help pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

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