

Testimony of Dr. Brian Haney, DO

**Medical Oncologist and Hematologist
New England Cancer Specialists**

In Support of LD 178 – Step Therapy Reform for Advanced Metastatic Cancer

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience in support of LD 178. My name is Dr. Brian Haney, and I am a medical oncologist at New England Cancer Specialists. I come before you not only as a physician but as an advocate for one of my patients who is currently caught in the harmful process of step therapy. Her story illustrates the real-life impact of these policies and why this legislation is so urgently needed.

A Patient Denied the Right to Timely, FDA-Approved Care

One of my patients, an otherwise healthy young woman with an active and demanding career, was recently diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. Understandably, this diagnosis was a shock to her and her family. In the face of such life-altering news, it is my duty to provide her with the most effective treatment to give her the best possible chance of managing her disease and continuing her life.

After careful consideration, we determined that the best course of action was an FDA-approved, first-line combination oral therapy. This treatment is supported by both clinical efficacy data and national guidelines. Importantly, it has demonstrated a clear survival benefit in patients with advanced metastatic breast cancer.

However, her insurance company denied coverage for this prescribed treatment. Instead, they are requiring that she try a different drug first—a drug that, while available, has not been shown to provide a similar survival benefit. In other words, the treatment we know could extend her life is being withheld due to a step therapy requirement to use a drug that we know may not.

The Harm of Step Therapy

This decision places my patient in an agonizing position. The appeals process has begun, but during this time, her treatment is delayed—time that we cannot afford to lose when dealing with a disease as aggressive as metastatic breast cancer. Every day of delay increases the risk that her condition may worsen. For patients like her, step therapy isn't just an administrative hurdle; it is a form of care denial that could lead to irreversible harm.

As her oncologist, I feel helpless and frustrated. I have the training and experience to know what is best for her based on her unique medical condition. Yet, this expertise is being disregarded by a cost-saving policy that puts profits ahead of patient survival.

Is anything about this in the best interest of the patient? No.

Why LD 178 is Critical

LD 178 will put an end to this dangerous practice for patients with advanced metastatic cancer. It will prohibit health plans from requiring patients to fail on one treatment before accessing another FDA-approved drug. This reform is essential to ensure that treatment decisions are made by the patient and their healthcare team—not by insurance companies.

Without this bill, more patients will endure unnecessary suffering and expedited death. Some may never get the chance to benefit from the treatments that could have prolonged their lives. As a physician, this is an outcome I cannot accept.

I urge you to pass LD 178 and protect patients like mine from these unjust and harmful delays. Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Brian Haney
New England Cancer Specialists
LD 178

Testimony attached for Dr. Brian Haney, Medical Oncologist and Hematologist and
New England Cancer Specialists. Testimony is in favor of LD178.