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Brunswick
LD 1496

LD 1496, "An Act to Ensure Ongoing Access to Medications and Care for Chronic Conditions and Conditions Requiring Long-term Care by Changing Requirements for Prior Authorizations"

Good afternoon, Representative Zager, and honorable committee members.

My name is Karen Angeline, from Brunswick, here to support LD 1301. I'm on Zoom because I'm the 24-7 sole caregiver for my daughter, who is seriously ill, and there is no respite care available for me to leave her.

I have a severe migraine disorder--brain stem and vestibular type with aura. The medication that keeps it in control, and allows me to do the vital, unpaid, 24-7 work of caregiving my sick daughter, was denied when my pharmacy plan changed in January.

I had to go through the prior authorization process again and the cost increased from \$30 to \$600. I went without the medication for several days--twice. The first time was because I couldn't afford it, and the second time because I hadn't realized the first fill was provisional until the authorization was finally approved.

While feeling dizzy, brainfoggy and irritable without my medicine, I called Aetna to find out what was happening.

When I asked the "customer service representative" why they were doing this with a medication that I obviously needed and that had been approved previously, she said, "We do this for your safety."

Well, you can imagine how I reacted to that. I said, "Listen, I know you are probably reading from a script and this isn't your fault. But please do not insult me. This has nothing to do with my safety and everything to do with Aetna's profits. My doctors already established that this is safe and effective, so let's not even pretend what is going on here. We see and know what the insurance companies are doing."

I was so mad, I asked for the supervisor so I could convey the same message to someone who might pass it up the chain.

So I'm also passing it up the chain to you, who can do something about it by supporting this bill.

A couple of days ago UPS dropped something on my front porch. It was from Aetna--an expensively packaged pair of Aetna-branded slipper socks. I think this was a consolation "gift" because I had complained about their greed.

I actually yelled at the package. Really??? How about you save that money so you can make my damn medications affordable? My daughter looked at me like I was crazy.

This kind of smiley face, waste-of-money customer abuse and gaslighting needs to stop. You can help do it by supporting LD 1496.

Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any of your questions.