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February 26, 2014

The Honorable Governor Mike Pence
Office of the Governor
Statehouse
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2797

RE: SB 262 - *Support*

Dear Governor Pence:

I am writing you today as a member of the Advisory Board of the Global Healthy Living Foundation (GHLF) and the more than 56,000 members they represent, including approximately 2,800 in Indiana, to express our support for SB 262. The GHLF represents patients living with chronic illnesses nationwide, from those with osteoporosis to those with chronic mental illness. Many of the patients they represent, including the nearly 30,000 with Rheumatoid Arthritis, take biologics.

At the GHLF, the focus is on improving the lives of patients with chronic illnesses through health care education and mobilization programs that stress the importance of diagnosis, early and innovative medical intervention, long-term lifestyle improvement and therapeutic compliance. Using various channels of influence, the GHLF works to communicate and leverage new and improved medical treatments, such as biologics, to patients. As promising as these innovative drugs are, the GHLF believes that assuring their safety should be of paramount concern.

We believe that SB 262 updates Indiana law to cover biologics and biosimilars in a way that protects patients. Unlike traditional chemical drugs, biologics have very unique, complex structures made from living cells that are not easily understood or replicated. A small change or difference in the biosimilar or biologic has the potential to either help or adversely affect the patient.

There are two substitution requirements that SB 262 contains that the GHLF believes are key in order to ensure patient safety. First, the bill requires that pharmacists dispensing an interchangeable biosimilar notify both the prescribing physician and the patient. Second, the pharmacist and prescribing health care provider must also keep a written record of the substitution for no less than five years.

For patients, these two provisions are crucial. A determination of product interchangeability could take the decision-making process out of the hands of patients and doctors and put it into

the hands of the pharmacists or insurers through states' automatic substitution policies. We believe that the choice of product should be decided only by patients and physicians, who are ultimately responsible for patient care and have the full spectrum of a patient's medical history. In addition, if it is determined by the doctor and patient that an interchangeable biosimilar can be substituted for a biologic, or is the preferred treatment in a particular case, it is important that proper record keeping be in place in order to track any adverse events that may occur.

As a state leader, it is your duty to ensure that the patients and physicians of Indiana are in charge of the drugs prescribed, that patient safety is the top priority in the health care process and that medical decisions remain between a doctor and his or her patient. I respectfully urge you to sign SB 262 into law because it introduces biosimilars to Indiana in a way that ensures the safety of patients and preserves the physician-patient relationship.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of my remarks and would be pleased to provide any further information that you may require.

Sincerely,

Michael Wartell, PhD
Chancellor Emeritus, Indiana Purdue University Ft. Wayne

CC: Brian Neal, Health Policy Director
Sean Keefer, Legislative Director