



SUBJECT: SUPPORT of AMENDMENT #14 to H. 4891 - equitable access to biomarker testing

To Whom It May Concern,

As the House begins debate on Wednesday of H. 4891, the Rare & Ready Coalition asks you to support AMENDMENT #14, equitable access to biomarker testing, filed by Representative Meghan Kilcoyne.

Patient access to biomarker testing can help to achieve better health outcomes, improved quality of life and reduced costs. Insurance coverage for biomarker testing is failing to keep pace with innovation and advancements in treatment. Without action, this could increase existing disparities in health outcomes by race, ethnicity, income, and geography.

Rather than guessing with difficult treatment regimens that might or might not work, biomarker testing finds the right treatment for the patient. It's better for the patient and saves health care dollars as patients don't go through multiple regimens of treatment that don't work.

Biomarker testing helps patients get the care that's right for them

Progress in improving health outcomes increasingly involves the use of precision medicine, which uses information about a person's own genes or proteins to prevent, diagnose or treat various diseases and chronic illnesses. Biomarker testing is an important step to accessing precision medicine which includes targeted therapies that can lead to improved survivorship and better quality of life for patients battling diseases and chronic illnesses.

Biomarker testing guides treatment across a wide range of conditions

While most current biomarker testing applications are in cancer, biomarker testing is becoming increasingly important to the treatment of other disease areas including rheumatoid arthritis, other autoimmune conditions, organ and tissue transplant, rare diseases and preeclampsia. This is why this amendment is disease agnostic.

Good for patients

Amendment #14 ensures coverage for biomarker testing based on evidence-based criteria and puts guardrails on the use of prior authorization.

Improved quality of life

When a patient has access to biomarker testing and gets the right treatment for their disease initially, they don't have to endure multiple treatments that don't improve their condition.

Reduce health care costs

Precision medicine via biomarker testing has the potential to reduce overall health care costs by ensuring the patient has the right therapy for them rather than having to try treatment after treatment with no improvement.

Reduce health care disparities

Not all communities in Massachusetts are benefitting from the latest advancements in biomarker testing and precision medicine. Patients who are older, black, uninsured or MassHealth-insured, are less likely to be tested for certain guideline-indicated biomarkers. There are lower rates of testing in community settings versus academic medical centers.