



Lawmakers to Join with Diabetes Advocates and Patients Urging Passage of Insulin Expense-Cap Legislation

September 16 2019 10:03 AM



PEORIA – State Senator Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) gathered with fellow state lawmakers and diabetes health advocates in Peoria Monday to urge support for new a new measure aimed at reducing the skyrocketing cost of insulin.

“There are people in this state who have to choose between buying their prescription insulin and paying for groceries or making their mortgage payment,” Manar said. “These prices are absolutely out of control and we have a responsibility as lawmakers to take immediate action to ensure that every person has access to the care they need.”

Senate Bill 667, introduced by Manar, would cap out of pocket insulin expenses at \$100 for a 30-day supply.

Manar was joined by State Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria) and State Rep. Jehan Gordon-Booth (D-Peoria) to push for the legislation’s passage and hear from individuals who have been directly impacted by rising insulin costs.

“It’s been 10 years since the insulin I need to survive was only \$800. Now it cost \$1800,” said Megan Blair, a single mother who has experienced firsthand the consequences of rising insulin costs. “Something needs to change. Something has to be done about this.”

According to the American Diabetes Association, there are over 30 million Americans who have diabetes, 7.4 million of which require prescription insulin every day to survive. However, the increasing costs associated with the medication have led many patients to ration their supply or seek care outside of the country.

“For far too long pharmaceutical companies have been allowed to take advantage of people who require this medication to live, and it’s unacceptable,” Koehler said. “Working to ease the financial burden on families who require prescription insulin is the humane thing to do.”

The legislation would make Illinois just the second state in the country to cap out of pocket insulin expenses. Colorado became the first to do so earlier this year.

“We cannot continue to sit back and allow drug companies to charge exorbitant prices on lifesaving medication that people depend on every day,” said State Rep. Guzzardi, the lead sponsor of the bill in the House. “Instead of crushing Illinois consumers to pad corporate profits, let’s take real action to prioritize the actual health and well-being of Illinois residents who rely on insulin.”

The legislation has also garnered the support of several advocacy organizations, including the American Diabetes Association, Illinois State Medical Society, Illinois Pharmacists Association and AARP.

“AARP Illinois supports this measure on behalf of our 1.7 million members, many of whom have told us about the hardships they face in paying for their prescription drugs,” said State Director Bob Gallow. “We commend Sen. Manar, Rep. Guzzardi, and other legislators for recognizing that everyday Illinois residents are having to make heartbreaking choices about whether to pay for medicine or other basic necessities with their fixed incomes. And we hope that SB 667 will be a stepping stone to getting further reforms that will lower the cost of prescription drugs for everyone.”