



March 24, 2023

Senator Pat Spearman, Chair
Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89101

Dear Chair Spearman and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor,

The Nevada Oncology Society (NOS) and the Association for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) are pleased to support **SB 194**, which would extend guardrails around step therapy beyond Stage 3 and 4 metastatic cancer.

NOS is a powerful community of oncologists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other allied health professionals who provide a voice for multidisciplinary cancer care teams and the patients they serve. NOS' mission is to identify and improve oncology practice issues that adversely affect patient access to cancer care. ASCO is a national organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With nearly 45,000 members, our core mission is to ensure that cancer patients have meaningful access to high quality, equitable cancer care.

NOS and ASCO are committed to supporting policies that reduce cost while preserving quality of cancer care; it is critical that such policies be developed and implemented in a way that does not undermine patient access. Payer utilization management approaches like step therapy protocols are of particular concern because they represent greater likelihood of raising barriers to appropriate care for individuals with cancer. While many treatments preferred by payers cost less, they may not be the best treatment available for the patient.

Step therapy or fail first policies can be particularly problematic for patients with cancer because they can significantly delay a patient's access to the best treatment available for their condition. While waiting to complete a "step," a patient with cancer may experience disease progression and irreversible damage to their overall health.

NOS and ASCO are pleased that SB 194 would place guardrails around step therapy by requiring carriers to grant an exception to a step therapy protocol if:

- The drug required to be used is contraindicated or will cause an adverse reaction;
- The drug required to be used is expected to be ineffective based on the known clinical characteristics of the patient and the known characteristics of the prescription drug regimen;
- The patient is stable on a prescription drug selected by their clinician; or
- The patient has already tried a prescription drug that was discontinued by the prescriber due to lack of efficacy or an adverse event.

NOS and ASCO are encouraged by the steps SB 194 takes toward improving step therapy in Nevada, and we welcome the opportunity to be a resource for you. For a more detailed understanding of our policy recommendations on this issue, we invite you to read the [ASCO Position Statement: Utilization](#)

Management. Please contact Sarah Lanford at ASCO at Sarah.Lanford@asco.org if you have any questions or if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lori J. Pierce MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "L".

Annabel Barber, MD, FACS
President
Nevada Oncology Society

Lori J. Pierce, MD, FASTRO, FASCO
Chair of the Board
Association for Clinical Oncology