



Physicians Caring for Texans

**Prohibition of Copay Accumulators
House Insurance Committee
House Bill 2668 by Rep. Four Price
Physician Testimony by John Flores, MD
April 13, 2021**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members, for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dr. John Flores, and I am an internist from the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Today, I am testifying on behalf of the Texas Medical Association and its more than 55,000 physician and medical student members across Texas **in support of** House Bill 2668.

I cannot stress enough how important this bill is to patient care. This bill addresses the increasingly common use of copay accumulator programs by health benefit plan issuers.

A copay accumulator program prohibits a manufacturer's coupon used by a patient for prescription drug purchases from being counted towards the patient's deductible and out-of-pocket maximum. This practice actually increases a patient's out-of-pocket costs and has a particularly negative impact on chronically ill patients and patients being treated with higher-cost medications.

These types of programs can function at the expense of the patient and to the benefit of the health plan. The health plan can essentially get paid twice, once when the coupon is presented to subsidize the patient's copay cost and a second time when the patient starts meeting his or her deductible, since the plan does not count the coupon payments towards the patient's deductible.

Arguments have been made that prohibiting copay accumulator programs will incentivize physicians to prescribe more expensive medications. This is not accurate.

Physicians prescribe based on what is best for the individual patient and what will lead to the best course of treatment and treatment outcome.

Medications that have coupons available are typically for our sickest patients, the chronically ill, or those recovering from a serious illness who are trying to maintain their health.

Simply put, copay accumulator programs are not good for patient care or patient finances. These programs and practices need to be prohibited as laid out in HB 2668.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions.