



To: Members of the Michigan House Health Policy Committee

From: Andy Johnston, Vice President of Government Affairs

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 4751

Date: November 12, 2013

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On behalf of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce and our 2,700 members, we oppose House Bill 4751.

For our members, both small and large, the cost of health care is a top concern. House Bill 4751 will make health care in Michigan less affordable, particularly for small business, and we remain opposed to any new mandated health insurance benefits.

Oral chemotherapy drugs and IV chemotherapy medications have different costs. If the Legislature enacts the price control mandate in House Bill 4751, it will simply shift the remaining costs to employers.

In addition to the cost, we are also opposed to this legislation because we do not believe government should interfere in decisions that are made via contract between insurance companies and pharmaceutical companies, or in the workplace between employers and employees. We oppose health insurance mandates because we believe employers and employees should decide, free of government interference, what diseases, medical conditions and other benefits to include in their health insurance coverage. Ultimately, they know best what they can afford and what they may or may not want covered.

This mandate is unique in that it interferes with private contracts almost to the extent of micromanagement. In other mandates, the government is requiring coverage. In this mandate, coverage is already required and the government is now dictating how private companies classify their products and how they price those products in comparison to each other. This is unreasonably intrusive.

Governmental intervention in purchasing decisions and contractual agreements is always dangerous. Where do you draw the line? Lawmakers should not be in the business of determining who receives special treatment under Michigan's insurance laws. How do you say "no" to those next in line for special coverage of their state-of-the-art drug.

We ask that you oppose this bill and focus on less government control, not more, and less top-down mandates, not government price controls or interference in private contracts.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.