



April 25, 2011

The Honorable Fiona Ma  
State Capitol  
Post Office Box 942849  
Sacramento CA 94249

RE: American College of Rheumatology Supports AB 310

Dear *Assemblymember* Ma:

The American College of Rheumatology in addition to the California Rheumatology Alliance would like to express our appreciation and support for AB310, legislation that would ensure that chronically-ill patients have access to drug therapies by prohibiting health plans and insurers from creating specialty tiers that require patients to pay a percentage of a prescription drug.

Health plans and insurers using “coinsurance” to cover costly specialty drugs, classified as Tier IV, impact patients with rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and other chronically-ill Americans nationwide. These patients are treated with specialty medications which cost thousands of dollars a year. Tiered formularies require patients with serious chronic conditions to pay percentages of their drug cost which can cost hundreds and thousands of dollars monthly. Due to the high cost, patients are forced to forego these effective treatments, a decision that is detrimental to their health. Your efforts to eliminate specialty tier “coinsurance” through AB 310 will remove a strong barrier to effective health care in California.

Insurance was created on the principle of shared risk, however specialty tier “coinsurance” prevents the primary intent of insurance - placing greater out-of-pocket cost on the sickest patients. AB310 would prohibit health plans and insurers from using “coinsurance” and would cap out-of-pocket co-pays for patients.

The American College of Rheumatology strongly supports AB 310 to ensure chronically-ill patients have access to specialty medication through limiting the out-of-pocket cost for prescription drugs.

If you have questions, please contact Aiken Hackett, ACR director of government affairs, at [ahackett@rheumatology.org](mailto:ahackett@rheumatology.org) or (404) 929-4811.

Sincerely,

David Borenstein, MD  
President, American College of Rheumatology

Tim Laing, MD  
Chair, Government Affairs Committee  
American College of Rheumatology

CC: California Assembly Committee on Health