

I am in favor of this bill.

Obesity is a medical diagnosis, just like any other medical diagnosis given by a trained medical professional. The same as diabetes, chronic lung disease, high blood pressure... you name it. The difference is the drugs prescribed to treat these diagnosed medical conditions are covered by your insurance plan. The drugs now used to treat obesity are not.

An obesity diagnosis is something that is given to someone like me, who has struggled with their weight their whole life – since childhood. Its not just a matter of what you eat or how much you exercise. Yes, that's a HUGE part of it, but even with those parts kept up on a regular basis not all bodies regulate the same way, and these new medications assist in regulating so that OUR bodies can behave like the average person's body can.

Additionally, by covering these medications, and allowing patients availability to these, it will decrease the propensity for patients like me to have future diagnosis of diseases such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes that will require additional medications. Like I alluded to before, my weight has been an ongoing fight for me ever since I can remember – and the aforementioned diseases run in my family. I am currently doing everything I can to try to maintain my weight, but no matter what I do, working with my healthcare professional (currently using other weight loss medications that are approved and, on the market,) I still am in the obese category, and struggle every day with my weight. These new medications, the GLP-1 medications, work differently, and have found a way for people like me to finally manage this disease.

As it stands now, it is unfair that with a medical diagnosis, and a medicine available for the diagnosis, that it is not covered as other prescriptions are, on the drug coverage plan that we are currently covered by under PERS.

I kindly ask that you give this bill a DO PASS.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.