

Madame Chair and members of the Human Services Committee

My name is Julie Blehm. I have lived with Type 1 diabetes mellitus for 51 years and I am also an internal medicine physician who has cared for many people with diabetes mellitus. In my 51 years with diabetes the price of insulin has risen dramatically from the 35-dollar range to over 350 dollars per vial. It only costs a few dollars to produce a vial of insulin. Insulin is a lifesaving medication for many people with diabetes. Good control of blood sugars decreases the incidence of long-term complications, and in many cases, this is achieved only with the use of insulin.

I realize this bill will only affect people who have health insurance but many of them cannot afford the copay for the insulin because of the high cost. They often ration their use of insulin which leads to poor control of their diabetes and may cause increasing complications. I know of several such cases, including one that ended in the death of a young person with Type 1 diabetes.

Please consider voting to approve this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Julie Blehm, MD