



HB 1216  
Senate Human Services Committee  
March 10, 2025

Good morning, Chair Lee, and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

I am Bobbie Will, the ND, MT, SD, and WY State Policy and Advocacy Manager for Susan G. Komen. I live in Representative Karls District 35 and am thankful she is sponsoring this important piece of legislation. I am before you on behalf of breast cancer patients in North Dakota to urge your **support of HB 1216**, which relates to out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drug cost-sharing requirements.

Health insurers have instituted “copay accumulator adjustment programs” which prevent payments made by copay assistance from drug manufacturers and nonprofits from counting toward a patient’s cost-sharing requirements. HB 1216 will help breast cancer patients in North Dakota continue to access the treatments they need by ensuring all payments made by or on behalf of a patient count toward their cost-sharing requirements.

According to a recent study of claims data, a vast majority of copay assistance is used for treatments that do not have a generic alternative.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, many patients are not aware that copay assistance is not counted toward their deductible or out-of-pocket maximum, and they have to pay hundreds to thousands of dollars out of pocket to continue their treatments.

A breast cancer patient should not be forced to abandon their treatment or skip doses due to costs. Studies have shown that patients are far more likely to abandon their treatment when out-of-pocket costs exceed \$100.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, we hear from patients who have been forced to stop using their medications due to the high out-of-pocket costs that end up having an increase in negative health outcomes and hospital visits- ultimately resulting in increases to overall health care costs.

As committed partners in the fight against breast cancer, we know how deeply important it is for North Dakota breast cancer patients to not be punished for using copay assistance to help them afford the necessary treatments they need. As such, we support HB 1216 and urge you to pass this critical legislation.

Bobbie Will  
[bwill@komen.org](mailto:bwill@komen.org)

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<sup>1</sup> IQVIA. An Evaluation of Co-Pay Card Utilization in Brands after Generic Competitor Launch. <https://www.iqvia.com/locations/united-states/library/factsheets/evaluation-of-co-pay-card-utilization>

<sup>2</sup> Gleason PP, Starmer CI, Gunderson BW, Schafer JA, Sarran HS. Association of prescription abandonment with cost share for high-cost specialty pharmacy medications. *J Manag Care Pharm.* 2009;15(8):648-658. doi:10.18553/jmcp.2009.15.8.648