

Good afternoon.

My name is Bob Miller. I live in Prior Lake with my wife, Mary. I am here because I am among the nearly 40% of people living with multiple sclerosis who have altered the use of their medications due to cost.

When I was diagnosed almost 20 years ago, it started with a dizziness and slurred speech and then I started having difficulty with one of my legs. At one point, it got so bad that I was slurring my speech and getting dizzy about every 15 minutes.

Within a few months, I was prescribed Betaseron, a disease-modifying or therapy or DMT that has been shown to modify the course of MS and prevent the accumulation of disability.

Symptoms and prescriptions therapies vary widely for unpredictable MS, and Betaseron happened to work for me for 12 years.

When introduced in 1993, Betaseron costs about \$11,500 a year. By 2022, its cost had risen to over \$111,000 annually. Median costs for MS DMTs was \$94,000 in 2022. When generics are included it is \$80,000. Insurance companies often treat generics for specialty drugs like a specialty drug with higher costs.

As I transitioned insurance carriers seven years ago, I checked to see what my out-of-pocket costs would be. I was told I'd pay over \$10,000 a year out-of-pocket. I'm on a fixed income and that amount jeopardizes my family's retirement security.

When I stopped taking Betaseron, my doctors told me I was rolling the dice with my health.

Luckily, I have not had a relapse. But I don't know what my future holds.

And I strongly feel that no one should have to make that kind of decision. Medications cannot improve lives if people cannot afford to access them.

The National MS Society applauds SF 2744's intent to bring more transparency, discussion, and attention to the high costs of prescription drugs for people with chronic conditions.

We appreciate that the Prescription Drug Affordability Act bill utilizes a multi-stakeholder approach in acknowledging the roles of health plans, employers, clinical researchers, drug manufacturers, patients, and others.

People with a chronic illness like MS need to know they'll be able to get the life-changing medication they need when they need it. I urge your support for the Prescription Drug Affordability Act, and I thank you for your time.