



October 14, 2014

The Honorable Monica J. Lindeen
Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
840 Helena Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Commissioner Lindeen,

On behalf of the Arthritis Foundation (AF) and the American College of Rheumatology (ACR), we would like to thank you for taking positive action and requiring major insurers in Montana, beginning in 2015, to treat all prescription drugs equally.

This change not only brings fairness and lower prices to expensive prescription drugs and ends discriminatory practices, but it is also a major milestone in overcoming the unique barriers to care faced by people with arthritis: high cost of treatment, difficulty accessing medications and “specialty tiers,” which cover essential drugs at only 50 percent or less. The bold steps you’ve taken make a substantial difference in the lives of people with arthritis. With you as their champion, people with arthritis in Montana will not have to fight the battle against their disease alone.

The AF and the ACR appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your staff to continue this fight for access to affordable care. Hopefully, this pioneering approach will inspire your colleagues across the country, encouraging them to lead as boldly as their authority allows. Our organizations often work in collaboration with other stakeholders and coalitions such as the Coalition for Accessible Treatments. Together our organizations represent over 9,400 rheumatologists and rheumatology health professionals around the world committed to advancing excellence in the care of patients with arthritis and rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases, as well as more than 50 million Americans with doctor-diagnosed arthritis. If we may assist you with any additional information or answer any questions, please contact Starla Tanner at stanner@rheumatology.org or (404) 633-3777, or Sandie Preiss, Vice President of Advocacy and Access for the Arthritis Foundation, at spreiss@arthritis.org or (202) 887-2910.

We applaud this groundbreaking development that will have such an important impact on so many with arthritis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joseph Flood'.

Joseph Flood, MD
President
American College of Rheumatology

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ann M. Palmer'.

Ann M. Palmer
President & CEO
Arthritis Foundation