



# Advocacy in ACTION

Fighting for People with Arthritis



## Letter from Sandie Preiss, Vice President of Advocacy and Access, Arthritis Foundation



**Arthritis Foundation  
Vice President of  
Advocacy and Access,  
Sandie Preiss**

Dear Arthritis Advocates,

As I step into my new role at the Arthritis Foundation as Vice President of Advocacy and Access, I want you to know that I consider it a privilege to represent your interests with policymakers. I am proud and excited to be part of the national organization that speaks for people with arthritis. I have worked on advocacy and access issues throughout my career and I know firsthand that an educated and empowered network of citizen volunteers can inform elected officials about their needs and, in turn, shape public policy. We have already seen some very substantial wins in Delaware and Maryland, where monthly out-of-pocket co-pays have been capped for pharmaceuticals.

Open access to affordable, safe treatment for people with arthritis, strengthening the patient, provider relationship, enhancing the understanding of arthritis as a public policy issue and supporting research to find a cure are all issues on the Arthritis Foundation's advocacy agenda. As we continue to develop the Arthritis Foundation's advocacy platform and push for access to critical treatments, I ask you to become an active and empowered advocate. Personal stories are the most compelling form of persuasion. They force the listener to engage and capture attention unlike any other form of communication. Their impact often forces policymakers to reframe their thinking and can help raise the visibility of arthritis as a public policy issue.

In my short time at the Arthritis Foundation, I have already learned that many policymakers are unaware that over 50 million Americans suffer from doctor-diagnosed arthritis and that this disease is the number one reason for disability in the U.S. Please tell your story and engage policymakers in a campaign to find new ways to treat and manage arthritis. Join our advocate network and reinforce the Arthritis Foundation's

reputation as the trusted partner of people with arthritis and add your voice by communicating with decision and policymakers.

Together, we will ensure that those decision makers and policymakers, as well as care providers, understand that arthritis is a chronic disease that is life-altering.

Thank you for your willingness to write, call and visit at both the national and state level. I look forward to partnering with you and sharing our achievements.

Sincerely,



Sandie Preiss  
Vice President, Advocacy and Access

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## JA Conference 2014



**Advocates at JA Conference 2014**

More than 50 advocates joined the Ambassador rank and countless E-Advocates signed up to be the voice of arthritis with public policy makers at the JA Conference. Presentations were given by staff and volunteers on advocacy, state issues, and an advocacy roundtable was held for participants to share their advocacy successes. In addition, 68 videos of personal stories were recorded to use in our advocacy messages. Would you like to share your personal story? Contact Mark Guimond at [mguimond@arthritis.org](mailto:mguimond@arthritis.org)!

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## New Massachusetts Law to Allow for New Treatments for Arthritis



**Massachusetts**

The Arthritis Foundation thanked Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick for his enactment of House Bill 3734 that permits the sale of biosimilar medications when they become available. The Foundation has actively supported this legislation providing testimony, written position statements and a letter of support urging the Governor to sign the bill.

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**Governor Deval  
Patrick**

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## **Pennsylvania Moves Closer to Allowing Biosimilars**

The Pennsylvania Senate passed Senate Bill 405 by a vote of 44-6 to allow the substitution of biosimilars for biologic medicines. Arthritis Foundation advocates visited the legislature the day before the vote to help secure the bill's passage. A great victory for our Ambassadors and Advocates!

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## **Six new Co-Sponsors Added to H.R. 460 – Patients' Access to Treatments Act**

Six co-sponsors have been added to H.R. 460 bringing the total to 133 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The co-sponsors are:

Rep. Howard Coble [NC-6]

Rep. Timothy J. Walz [MN-1]

Rep. Edward R. Royce [CA-39]

Rep. Michael G. Grimm [NY-11]

Rep. Beto O'Rourke [TX-16]

Rep. Ann M. Kuster [NH-2]

