

Federal Step Therapy Reform Assignment

The 116th Congress just introduced important legislation to reform step therapy, or “fail first” practices nationwide. We need your help in sending out targeted messages to your Representative to garner co-sponsorships of this important legislation.

WHAT IS STEP THERAPY?

Step therapy, sometimes known as “fail first,” is a tool used by insurers that requires patients to try a drug, or drugs, that are preferred by the insurance company before they can access the therapy originally prescribed by their physician.

When inappropriately used, step therapy can undermine the clinical judgment of health care providers and put patients’ health at unnecessary risk. Many patients must try multiple drugs before finding one that works for them, so the ability to remain on a drug that works is critical. A survey of more than 1,400 patients conducted in 2016 by the Arthritis Foundation revealed:

- Over 50% of all patients reported having to try two or more different drugs prior to getting the one their doctor had originally prescribed.
- Step therapy was stopped in 39% of cases because the drugs were ineffective, and 20% of the time due to worsening conditions.
- Nearly 25% of patients who switched insurance providers were required to repeat step therapy with their new carrier.
- A majority of respondents experienced negative health effects from delays in getting on the right treatment.

Step therapy should not disrupt a patient’s ongoing care or destabilize treatment if they change jobs or insurance carriers. People with arthritis depend on life-changing medications to prevent further disease progression and joint degradation. Step therapy requirements can be less administratively burdensome to patients and providers if exceptions are provided in cases where:

1. The treatment prescribed is contraindicated or has been ineffective in treating a patient’s disease
2. The treatment under a step therapy protocol is reasonably expected to be ineffective;

3. The treatment may cause an adverse reaction or physical harm to the patient;
4. The treatment is not in the best interest of the patient or could interfere with the patient's ability to complete activities of daily living; and
5. The patient is stable for his or her disease on medications already selected by a provider.

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO?

Congress can help by passing H.R. 2279, the Safe Step Act. The legislation streamlines step therapy for patients with employer-sponsored insurance by establishing a transparent exceptions process for step therapy review by health insurance plans; establishing a reasonable and clear timeframe for override decisions; and requiring insurers to consider the patient's medical history, the provider's expertise in partnership with their own patient, and respect for the health care provider's professional judgment – before a health plan can delay or outright deny a patient's ability to access a medically necessary treatment.

The legislation was first introduced to the 115th Congress as the Restoring the Patient's Voice Act (HR 2077) and had tremendous bipartisan support with eighty eight sponsors.

FAST FACTS ABOUT HR 2279 THE SAFE STEP ACT

Where was the bill introduced?

- The bill was introduced to the House of Representatives on April 10, 2019. It is called the Safe Step Act, or H.R. 2279.

Who are the sponsors of the legislation?

- Representatives Raul Ruiz (D-CA) and Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) are the introducing sponsors of the legislation.

Which committee was the bill referred to?

- The bill was referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor.

What happened to the last federal step therapy reform legislation?

- Last Congress, 88 members sponsored HR 2077 the Restoring the Patient's Voice Act legislation. This bill was re-introduced this Congress as the Safe Step Act.

What happens to the sponsors from last Congress?

- All 88 members of Congress who sponsored the legislation in the last congress will have to sponsor this legislation.

WHAT SHOULD AMBASSADORS DO TO ADVOCATE?

Ambassadors, the Arthritis Foundation is calling on you to be the voice for people with arthritis by connecting with your Representative to ask them to sponsor this important legislation.

Your advocacy should be targeted based on the following precision advocacy questions:

1. Does my Representative belong to the committee of jurisdiction?

This legislation was referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor. These members of Congress will consider this legislation first, so it is important that our messages to them are particularly strong. *Please see a list of the members of this Committee:*

Bobby Scott, Chairman, D-VA

Susan A. Davis, D-CA

Raúl M. Grijalva, D-AZ

Joe Courtney, D-CT

Marcia L. Fudge, D-OH

Frederica Wilson, D-FL

Suzanne Bonamici, D-OR

Mark Takano, D-CA

Alma Adams, D-NC

Mark DeSaulnier, D-CA

Donald Norcross, D-NJ

Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-IL

Adriano Espaillat, D-NY

Pramila Jayapal, D-WA

Joseph D. Morelle, D-NY

Susan Wild, D-PA

Josh Harder, D-CA

Lucy McBath, D-GA

Kim Schrier, D-WA

Lauren Underwood, D-IL

Jahana Hayes, D-CT

Donna Shalala, D-FL

Andy Levin, Vice Chair, D-MI

Ilhan Omar, D-MN

David Trone, D-MD

Haley Stevens, D-MI

Susie Lee, D-NV

Joaquin Castro, D-TX

Lori Trahan, D-MA

Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member, R-NC

Phil Roe, R-TN

Glenn Thompson, R-PA

Tim Walberg, R-MI

Brett Guthrie, R-KY

Bradley Byrne, R-AL

Glenn Grothman, R-WI

Elise Stefanik, R-NY

Rick W. Allen, R-GA

Francis Rooney, R-FL

Lloyd Smucker, R-PA

Jim Banks, R-IN

Mark Walker, R-NC

James Comer, R-KY

Ben Cline, R-VA

Russ Fulcher, R-ID

Van Taylor, R-TX

Steve Watkins, R-KS

Ron Wright, R-TX

Dan Meuser, R-PA

William Timmons, R-SC

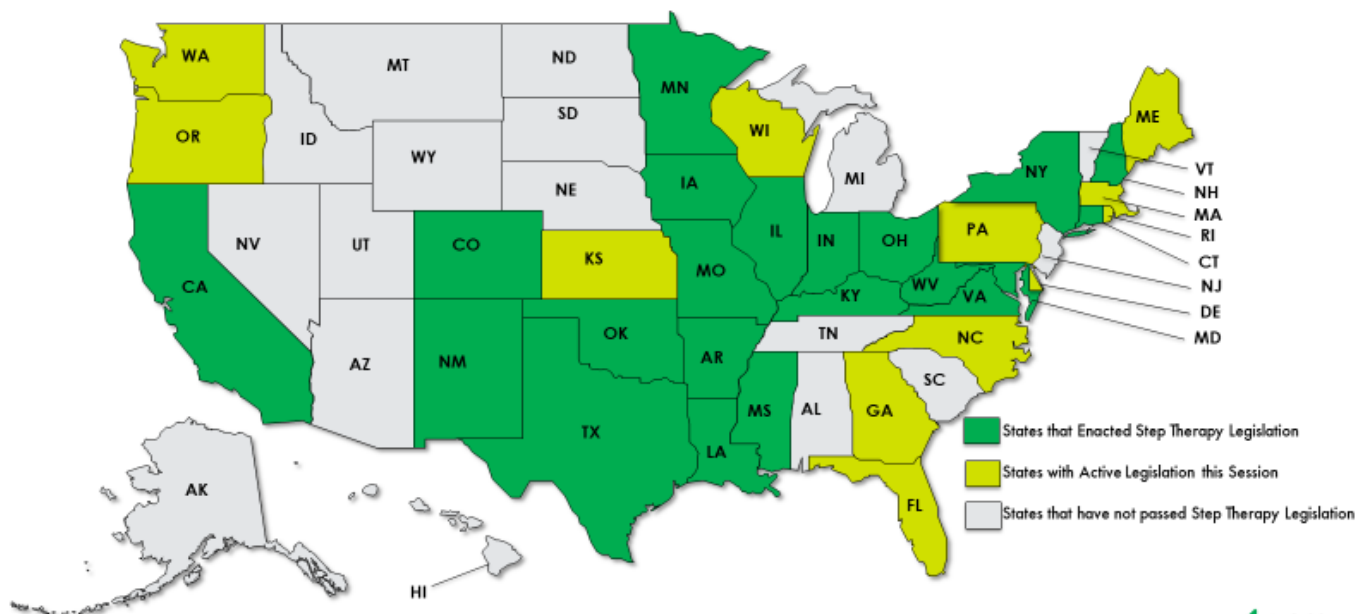
If you live in the congressional district of one of these members of Congress, please amplify your advocacy by sharing the following link to take action with your community:

<http://bit.ly/HR2279SafeStep>

2. Has my state passed step therapy reform legislation?

You might also consider letting your legislator know if your state has passed step therapy reform legislation as a way to strengthen your ask.

- If your state has already passed step therapy reform legislation, the federal legislation would expand the protections of any state based law to include federally regulated health plans, like employer sponsored insurance plans.
- If your state has not yet passed step therapy reform, this federal legislation would help offer protections to the patients in your home state.
- Ideally, all states will have a step therapy reform law coupled with this federal legislation to make sure that patients in the state have optimal protections. Take a look at the map below to see where your state stands:



3. Is my Representative a Freshman member of Congress?

There are 88 brand new members of the House of Representatives. If your Representative is one of them, it's important to introduce yourself as an Arthritis Foundation Ambassador.

- Your new member of Congress may not know about or have heard about this legislation yet, so it is important that we teach them about the importance of patient-centered reforms like this one.
- You can also use this opportunity to teach your member of Congress about how arthritis affects you and others in their home state. Consider sharing the prevalence of arthritis in your state with your Representative to help them understand more about arthritis issues.

4. Did my member of Congress sponsor the legislation during the last Congress?

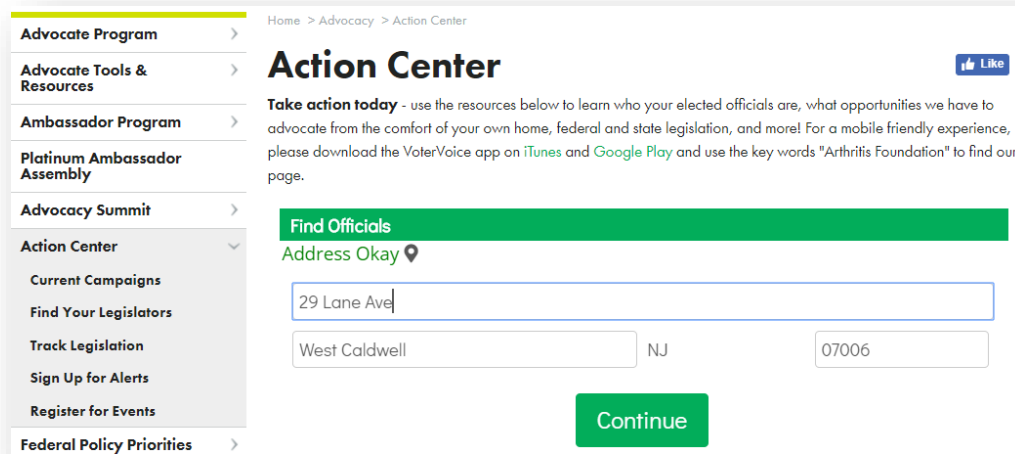
Take a look at the list of previous co-sponsors from the 115th Congress. If your Representative sponsored the legislation then, they are a great target for sponsorship this Congress. It is important to be persistent with these members to make sure they sign on again. Please review the list of previous sponsors below:

Rep. Ruiz, Raul [D-CA-36]*
Rep. Stivers, Steve [R-OH-15]
Rep. Comstock, Barbara [R-VA-10]
Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]
Rep. Johnson, Henry C. "Hank," Jr. [D-GA-4]
Rep. Bacon, Don [R-NE-2]
Rep. Rosen, Jacky [D-NV-3]
Rep. Wittman, Robert J. [R-VA-1]
Rep. Katko, John [R-NY-24]
Rep. Harper, Gregg [R-MS-3]
Rep. Moulton, Seth [D-MA-6]
Rep. Lieu, Ted [D-CA-33]
Rep. Lofgren, Zoe [D-CA-19]
Rep. Beatty, Joyce [D-OH-3]
Rep. Smith, Christopher H. [R-NJ-4]
Rep. Roe, David P. [R-TN-1]
Rep. DesJarlais, Scott [R-TN-4]
Rep. Maloney, Sean Patrick [D-NY-18]
Rep. Visclosky, Peter J. [D-IN-1]
Rep. Bucshon, Larry [R-IN-8]
Rep. Chabot, Steve [R-OH-1]
Rep. King, Peter T. [R-NY-2]
Rep. Dunn, Neal P. [R-FL-2]
Rep. Coffman, Mike [R-CO-6]
Rep. Marshall, Roger W. [R-KS-1]
Rep. Slaughter, Louise McIntosh [D-NY-25]
Rep. Kelly, Robin L. [D-IL-2]
Rep. Eshoo, Anna G. [D-CA-18]
Rep. Culberson, John Abney [R-TX-7]
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [D-CA-32]
Rep. Foster, Bill [D-IL-11]
Rep. LaHood, Darin [R-IL-18]
Rep. Bera, Ami [D-CA-7]
Rep. Schneider, Bradley Scott [D-IL-10]
Rep. Stefanik, Elise M. [R-NY-21]
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]
Rep. Courtney, Joe [D-CT-2]
Rep. Roskam, Peter J. [R-IL-6]
Rep. Payne, Donald M., Jr. [D-NJ-10]
Rep. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]
Rep. Ryan, Tim [D-OH-13]
Rep. Thompson, Bennie G. [D-MS-2]
Rep. Faso, John J. [R-NY-19]
Rep. O'Halleran, Tom [D-AZ-1]
Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. [D-CT-3]
Rep. Matsui, Doris O. [D-CA-6]
Rep. Palazzo, Steven M. [R-MS-4]
Rep. Raskin, Jamie [D-MD-8]
Rep. Duncan, John J., Jr. [R-TN-2]
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]
Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2]
Rep. Doggett, Lloyd [D-TX-35]
Rep. Joyce, David P. [R-OH-14]
Rep. Cohen, Steve [D-TN-9]
Rep. Turner, Michael R. [R-OH-10]
Rep. Garrett, Thomas A., Jr. [R-VA-5]
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]
Rep. Yoder, Kevin [R-KS-3]
Rep. Evans, Dwight [D-PA-2]
Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana [R-FL-27]
Rep. Watson Coleman, Bonnie [D-NJ-12]
Rep. Doyle, Michael F. [D-PA-14]
Rep. Esty, Elizabeth H. [D-CT-5]
Rep. Sensenbrenner, F. James, Jr. [R-WI-5]
Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [D-OR-3]
Rep. Herrera Beutler, Jaime [R-WA-3]
Rep. Paulsen, Erik [R-MN-3]
Rep. Krishnamoorthi, Raja [D-IL-8]
Rep. Rice, Kathleen M. [D-NY-4]
Rep. Cleaver, Emanuel [D-MO-5]
Rep. Lynch, Stephen F. [D-MA-8]
Rep. Kinzinger, Adam [R-IL-16]
Rep. Renacci, James B. [R-OH-16]
Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-8]
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]
Rep. Yarmuth, John A. [D-KY-3]
Rep. Grijalva, Raul M. [D-AZ-3]
Rep. Aguilar, Pete [D-CA-31]
Rep. Carbajal, Salud O. [D-CA-24]
Rep. Donovan, Daniel M., Jr. [R-NY-11]
Rep. Hanabusa, Colleen [D-HI-1]
Rep. Lujan Grisham, Michelle [D-NM-1]
Rep. Posey, Bill [R-FL-8]
Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [D-CA-28]
Rep. Womack, Steve [R-AR-3]
Rep. Young, Don [R-AK-At Large]
Rep. Price, David E. [D-NC-4]
Rep. Khanna, Ro [D-CA-17]

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

If you do not currently have contact information for your members of Congress, you can reach out to them using our Action Center. Simply use the legislator look up tool to find your members of Congress.

bit.ly/LegislatorLookUp



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Action Center

Take action today - use the resources below to learn who your elected officials are, what opportunities we have to advocate from the comfort of your own home, federal and state legislation, and more! For a mobile friendly experience, please download the VoterVoice app on [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#) and use the key words "Arthritis Foundation" to find our page.

Find Officials

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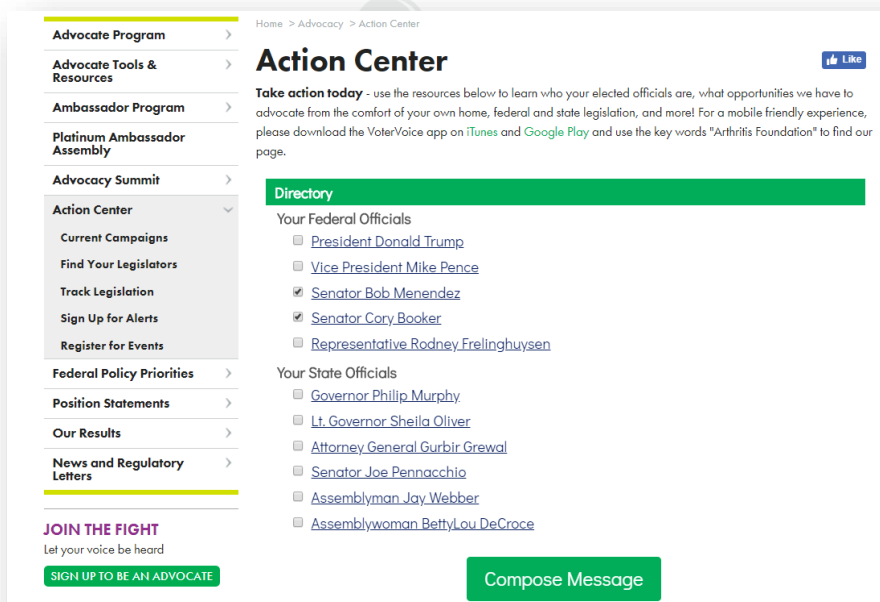
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By clicking continue, you'll be able to see all of your elected officials from the President of the United States all the way to your local Assemblyperson.



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Action Center

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Directory

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Compose Message

JOIN THE FIGHT
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- Sign Up for Alerts
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- Position Statements
- Our Results
- News and Regulatory Letters

- Click on your Representative of Congress to learn more about who they are and their background.
- When you're ready, check off the box next to your Representative and click compose message.
- From there, you'll be able to send your members of Congress your message asking them to join this important event.

Precision Advocacy Talking points:

- **If your Representative sits on the house committee on Education and Labor |**
 - “You may know that this HR 2279 has been referred to the House committee on education and labor, I hope that you and your fellow committee members will support this bill.”
- **If your state has passed step therapy reform |**
 - “At the state level, our legislators have worked to pass step therapy reform for patients on state regulated plans. This federal legislation will help expand protections against burdensome use of step therapy to people with federally regulated plans as well.”
- **If you have a Freshman Representative |**
 - “Did you know that arthritis is the leading cause of disability in the United States, carrying a price tag of more than \$300 billion dollars a year in direct and indirect health expenses? Legislation like the Safe Step Act can promote access and help to reduce the high costs associated with this disease.”
- **If your Representative sponsored last Congress |**
 - “I want to thank you for your sponsorship in the last Congress of the Restoring the Patient’s Voice act, HR 2077. This important legislation has been re-introduced this Congress as HR 2279, the Safe Step Act. Can I count on you to sponsor the legislation again this session?”

Talking Points for a Phone Call:

- Hello. I am from [your state] and I am an Advocate for the 54 million American adults and 300,000 children living with arthritis. I am calling today to urge [Representative’s name] to support HR 2279, the Safe Step Act.
- [Personalize with information about your arthritis story, and why this issue is important to you]
- People with arthritis often experience step therapy in their care journey. Step therapy, sometimes known as “fail first,” is a tool used by insurers that requires patients to try a drug, or drugs, that are preferred by the insurance company before they can access the therapy originally prescribed by their physician.
- When inappropriately used, step therapy can undermine the clinical judgment of health care providers and put patients’ health at unnecessary risk.
- A survey of more than 1,400 patients conducted in 2016 by the Arthritis Foundation revealed:
 - Over 50% of all patients reported having to try two or more different drugs prior to getting the one their doctor had originally prescribed.
 - Step therapy was stopped in 39% of cases because the drugs were ineffective, and 20% of the time due to worsening conditions.
 - Nearly 25% of patients who switched insurance providers were required to repeat step therapy with their new carrier.
 - A majority of respondents experienced negative health effects from delays in getting on the right treatment.

- I am calling on you to take action and show your support for patients with arthritis in your district by sponsoring H.R. 2279, the Safe Step Act.
- Thank you for all you do for people in our home state.

Draft Email

Dear [Contact or Representative Last Name]

As an Ambassador for the Arthritis Foundation and a constituent in your district, I am writing to urge you to support the 54 million American adults and 300,000 children living with arthritis by sponsoring HR 2279, the Safe Step Act.

[Personalize with information about your arthritis story, and why this issue is important to you]

People with arthritis often experience step therapy in their care journey. Step therapy, sometimes known as "fail first," is a tool used by insurers that requires patients to try a drug, or drugs, that are preferred by the insurance company before they can access the therapy originally prescribed by their physician. When inappropriately used, step therapy can undermine the clinical judgment of health care providers and put patients' health at unnecessary risk. Many patients must try multiple drugs before finding one that works for them, so the ability to remain on a drug that works is critical.

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I am calling on you to take action and show your support for patients in your district by sponsoring H.R. 2279, the Safe Step Act. Please consider sponsoring this bill to protect patients, restore the patient-physician relationship, and ensure patients who are stable on a drug can remain on that drug.

Thank you for all you do for people in our home state.

[Your name]