

Sample Support Letter – Assembly Bill 339 (Gordon)

Instructions for Sending: FAX the letter to Chair & Members of Assembly Health Committee (see attached roster)

Date **[Insert]**

Assemblymember Rob Bonta
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

AB 339 (Gordon): SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Bonta:

[Insert name of your organization] supports AB 339 (Gordon) which will help people with chronic health conditions by ensuring they are not discriminated against by a health plan or insurer because of their health condition.

The emergence of very high cost specialty drugs has led health plans and insurers to impose high copays and coinsurance on many drugs, including drugs for conditions as common as asthma as well as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, cancer, multiple sclerosis and other serious conditions. Some health plans put any drug that costs more than \$600 a month to the plan on the highest cost tier or “fourth tier” of a drug formulary (commonly known as the “specialty tier”) with coinsurance of up to 20%, 30% or even more. Californians with HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, cancer, multiple sclerosis, or other serious conditions can face high out-of-pocket costs and may exhaust their annual out-of-pocket limit of \$6,500 with a single prescription in the first month.

On February 25, 2015, the Federal Government released the HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2016, final rule reiterating the prohibition on discrimination in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In this notice, CMS cautioned issuers to avoid discouraging enrollment of individuals with chronic health needs and cited three examples of practices that effectively discriminate against individuals based on health condition. AB 339 (Gordon) implements concepts from federal guidance and improves upon the anti-discrimination provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

The Affordable Care Act increased access to care for people with chronic health conditions. This bill protects Californians by reducing cost barriers to prescription drugs needed by individuals with chronic health conditions. For these reasons, we respectfully request your support of AB 339 (Gordon).

Sincerely,

[NAME]

CC: Assemblymember Richard Gordon

