



**House Bill 766 - Memo of Support**  
Senate Committee on Health & Welfare – April 3, 2024

Chair Lyons, Vice-Chair Weeks, and Honorable Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) to express our support for House Bill 766 (H.766). Specifically, we want to express our support for amendments to the prior authorization and step therapy provisions that would improve patient access to treatment as well as continuity of care and disease management.

Almost 45,000 people in Vermont or 8.4% of the adult population have diagnosed diabetes. An estimated 3,100 people in Vermont are diagnosed with diabetes each year.<sup>1</sup> Diabetes requires continuous management and treatment - without it, people are at higher risk of developing serious and costly complications including cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, amputation, and stroke, among others. Any delay in care can be harmful for people with diabetes, who rely on their medication to live and manage the disease.

The ADA broadly supports efforts to minimize burdens put on patients and providers that hinders their ability to access the treatments that they need on an ongoing basis. For people with diabetes, 23% reported experiencing prior authorization problems compared to 14% of other adults.<sup>2</sup> Improving the prior authorization process for people with chronic diseases will help ensure that people with diabetes can maintain critically necessary continuity in accessing prescription medications and supplies.

Furthermore, burdensome step therapy protocols delay access to physician-prescribed medications. During these time periods, patients may experience worsening of conditions that can be debilitating or even life threatening. H.766 does not prohibit step therapy. Instead, it would establish a transparent process for requesting an exception for step therapy protocols when necessary and put patient care back in the hands of health care providers who know patients best.

We understand the need to contain health care costs; however, a patient-centered approach should be used to guide medical decisions. The ADA supports H.766 because it gives health care providers the tools they need to provide appropriate patient care.

We urge the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare to pass H.766. Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://diabetes.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/adv\\_2024\\_state\\_fact\\_vermont.pdf](https://diabetes.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/adv_2024_state_fact_vermont.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.kff.org/affordable-care-act/issue-brief/consumer-problems-with-prior-authorization-evidence-from-kff-survey/>