

January 20, 2016

Governor Nikki R. Haley, SC

Senator Tim Scott, SC

President Obama, USA

Dear Elected Officials,

I am a retired 72 year very active female living in the State of South Carolina. I have been fighting a very painful disease known as Polymyalgia Rheumatica since September 2015. I have a very good doctor and he has been treating me with Rayos which is the brand name of a time release Prednisone. I have been very lucky that this medicine is working well and I have no side effects. Unfortunately now I have a problem and the government is the only one that can fix it.

As of the first of the year the company that manufactures this medicine was mandated by law to put a disclaimer on their coupons for getting this medicine at a reduced rate. It states that it cannot be used by someone who is getting Medicare, Medicaid or insurance help. Unfortunately when you reach the age of 65 you have no choice but to sign up for Medicare. Last year I was able to use the coupon and my co-pay was \$50 per 30 day treatment. This year I cannot use the coupon and my health insurance granted my appeal to cover this medicine but unfortunately my co-pay is \$946 per 30 day treatment. No I cannot afford that but if the disclaimer was not on the coupon my co-pay would be \$50 as it was in 2015. Guess what - I am almost at the end of my treatment and I must now switch of a generic form of this medicine that I have had before for other treatments. This form of Prednisone makes me very sick to my stomach, causes a large amount of blot, extreme mood swings, etc. In other words I will be miserable until I get this disease out of my system. Also the generic Prednisone is not of a time release form so it dumps into the system all at once. This means that the generic brand is not in any way the equivalent of the brand name.

In closing it is too bad that most of the somewhat new and cutting edge medicines are only available to the rich. Where does that leave the poor middle class and retirees - in the long run costing more money because we are not able to get the help that we need to cut treatment time and keep our good health? I leave it to all of you but I can remember when health care including prescription medicine use to be much better.

Sincerely,

Penelope Cocking

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