



Global Healthy Living Foundation
515 North Midland Avenue
Upper Nyack, New York 10960 USA
+1 845 348 0400
+1 845 348 0210 fax
www.ghlf.org

Indiana Health Finance Commission
October 22, 2013

As prepared for delivery

- Good morning. I would like to thank Chairperson Miller, Vice-Chairperson Clere, and each of you on this commission for allowing me to be here today.
- My name is Joey Wohlhieter and I am a Patient Advocate with the Global Healthy Living Foundation.
- At the Global Healthy Living Foundation, we represent more than 56,000 patients nationwide, including approximately 2,500 here in Indiana, who live with chronic illnesses.
- As an organization, we strongly support the use of biosimilars. Ensuring patients access to affordable, effective medicine is a core part of our mission.
- Our focus is on improving the lives of these patients through health care education and programs that stress the importance of diagnosis, early and innovative medical intervention, long-term lifestyle improvement and therapeutic compliance.
- On a personal note, I am a patient successfully managing a chronic illness for over 5 years.
- Our President and co-founder Seth Ginsberg, was diagnosed with Spondyloarthritis, which is an inflammatory rheumatic disease, at age 13.

- We take the healthcare of patients with chronic illness seriously because we live it every day.
- Many of the patients we represent take biologics to manage their conditions.
- There are two primary principles that the GHLF believes are key to ensuring patients' safety and needs are met in the best way possible.
 - First, a pharmacist dispensing an interchangeable biosimilar should be required to notify the prescribing physician and the patient.
 - Second, the pharmacist and prescribing health care provider must keep a written record of the substitution for no less than five years.
- For patients, these two principals are crucial. A determination of product interchangeability could take the decision-making process out of the hands of patients and doctors and put it into the hands of the pharmacists or insurers through states' automatic substitution policies.
- We strongly believe that a patient has the right to know what medication they are taking and we believe the choice of treatment should be decided only by patients and their physicians, who are ultimately responsible for patient care and have the full spectrum of a patient's medical history.
- In addition, if it is determined by the doctor and patient that an interchangeable biosimilar can be substituted for a biologic, or is the preferred treatment in a particular case, it is important that proper record keeping be in place in order to track any adverse events that may occur



- We are patient advocates. Access and safety are our top priorities in the health care process.
- We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these principles and look forward to participating in any future steps.
- I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

