

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
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Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2145 HD1  
RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION.**

REP. SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

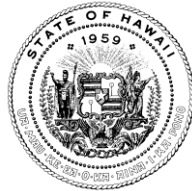
Hearing Date: February 23, 2018

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports HB2145 HD1, which is the  
3 consensus recommendation of a working group requested by HCR164 SD1 SLH 2017. DOH  
4 generally endorses the premise that medication synchronization may improve patient health,  
5 reduce health care costs, and promote efficient health care operations. However, the department  
6 is unable to comment on the time, effort, and complexity of implementing a medication  
7 synchronization program in Hawaii, and must defer to other agencies.

8 **Offered Amendments:** N/A.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS S. CHIN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**  
**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI COLÓN  
DIRECTOR

JO ANN M. UCHIDA TAKEUCHI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2018

Friday, February 23, 2018  
11:00 a.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2145, H.D. 1, RELATING TO MEDICATION  
SYNCHRONIZATION.**

TO THE HONORABLE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR, AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE:

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (“Department”) appreciates the opportunity to testify on H.B. 2145, H.D.1, Relating to Medication Synchronization. My name is Gordon Ito, and I am the Insurance Commissioner for the Department’s Insurance Division. The Department appreciates the intent of this bill, which is similar to S.B. 2656, S.D.1, and submits the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to facilitate synchronization of prescription medication dispensation. H.D. 2 removes language requiring a prescriber or pharmacist to determine whether partial medication fills or refills are in a patient’s best interest, and changes the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion.

This bill will encourage improved medication adherence rates for patients with chronic conditions. Better adherence and coordination may lead to improved health outcomes for patients, thereby helping to reduce healthcare costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

February 23, 2018

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

Re: HB 2145, HD1 – Relating to Medication Synchronization

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2145, HD1, requiring the health insurance and hospital and medical service plans that provide prescription drug benefits to apply prorated daily cost-sharing rates for prescriptions dispensed by pharmacies.

HMSA participated in the interim medication synchronization working group to examine whether synchronization could be applied effectively and safely in Hawaii. While medication synchronization can lead to improved adherence for medication regimens for people with particular chronic conditions, we do note the need for appropriate management standards and review processes in order to determine the program's effectiveness to the member and the plan.

We offer the following suggested changes and clarifications for the Committee to consider:

- Suggest clarifying how this benefit would apply to medications in “unbreakable” packaging (e.g., creams, liquid, unperforated blister sheets, etc.).
- We also suggest including a sunset date of 2021 and recommend a request by the legislature to the plans to report on the overall effectiveness of medication synchronization.

We urge the Committee to also consider whether safeguards should be in place to prevent aggressive marketing practices in the form of medication discounts that would lead to members being enticed to change pharmacies multiple times within a short period and the impact that could have on medication synchronization (partial fills, etc.).

Thank you for allowing us to comment on HB 2145, HD1.

Sincerely,

Pono Chong  
Vice-President, Government Relations



## **HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

1360 S. Beretania Street, Suite 200, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
Phone (808) 536-7702 Fax (808) 528-2376  
www.hawaiimedicalassociation.org

TO:

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 23, 2018

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: Conference Room 308

FROM:

Hawaii Medical Association

Dr. Christopher Flanders, DO, Executive Director

Lauren Zirbel, Government and Community Relations

**Re: HB 2145 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCRONIZATION**

**Position: SUPPORT**

Chairs & Committee Members:

The HMA supports this bill.

Evidence shows that the more medications a person is taking, the less adherent they are. This is in part because they have to keep track of their refills and make multiple visits to the pharmacy for those refills. That's why people taking multiple medications for chronic conditions benefit from medication synchronization.

Plan members taking multiple chronic medications typically refill each of those medications on a different cycle – making multiple trips to the pharmacy. For example, they may refill one medication on the first of the month, but refill a second medication on the 12th, then refill a third the week after that. That's three trips to the pharmacy during each fill cycle.

By working with their pharmacist, that plan member can arrange to pick up all three refills on the same day each fill cycle. The process, which involves "short fills," to synchronize the medication can be challenging in the early stages as it may take a few refills of smaller quantities to get all the drugs aligned on the same refill date or "sync date."

From the sync date forward, the patient is scheduled to pick up all of their refills on the same day each fill cycle. The addition of new drugs to the regimen or other changes,

**HMA OFFICERS**

President – William Wong, Jr., MD    President-Elect – Jerry Van Meter, MD    Secretary – Thomas Kosasa, MD  
Immediate Past President – Bernard Robinson, MD    Treasurer – Elizabeth A. Ignacio, MD  
Executive Director – Christopher Flanders, DO



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such as an unexpected hospitalization, could de-sync the patient, which would then require re-synchronization. In many ways, synchronization is a continuous effort that must be monitored and maintained but one that has substantially positive implications for patients.

The long-term convenience of medication synchronization is popular with patients and leads to increased adherence to drugs for chronic conditions – positively impacting health outcomes. Evidence shows that patients who have synced their chronic medications are about 30 per cent more adherent than patients who are not in a medication synchronization program.

### **HMA OFFICERS**

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Executive Director – Christopher Flanders, DO



American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network  
2370 Nu`uanu Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96817  
808.432.9149  
[www.acscan.org](http://www.acscan.org)

House Committee on Finance  
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

**HB 2145, HD1 – RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION**

Cory Chun, Government Relations Director – Hawaii Pacific  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2145, HD1, which allows for a pharmacist to provide less than a 30-day prescription for the purpose of synchronizing a patient's medications.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is the nation's leading cancer advocacy organization. ACS CAN works with federal, state, and local government bodies to support evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

Patients who are on multiple prescriptions with different fill times can create poor adherence to their medications with different fill dates. Synchronizing medications streamlines the process for patients so that they are able to re-fill all of their prescriptions on the same day each month, making it easier to maintain regular prescription drug use.

This measure reduces the burden of a patient and caregiver that has to make multiple trips to the pharmacy and make it more difficult to keep track of multiple medications. For people faced with chronic diseases and have limited mobility, this can become a barrier to care.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.



**SanHi**

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES  
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: February 22, 2018

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke  
Chair, Committee on Finance  
*Submitted Via Capitol Website*

RE: **H.B. 2145, H.D.1 Relating to Medication Synchronization**  
**Hearing Date: Friday, February 23, 2018 at 11:00 a.m.**  
**Conference Room: 308**

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Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee on Finance:

We submit this testimony on behalf of Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens”). Walgreens operates stores at more than 8,200 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. In Hawaii, Walgreens now has 19 stores on the islands of Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii.

Walgreens **strongly supports** H.B. 2145 H.D.1, which facilitates medication synchronization by requiring health insurance plans that provide prescription drug benefits to apply prorated daily cost-sharing rates for prescriptions dispensed by pharmacies.

Walgreens supports allowing medication synchronization because it is a proven process that creates better outcomes for patients and means less trips to the pharmacy. Medication synchronization allows a pharmacist to review patient medications and sync medication refills to all be picked up on a single day each month. Aligning refills can improve patient health by simplifying the patient effort needed to comply with medication therapies. Many patients who require long-term maintenance medications miss doses of their regular medications. Studies show that when the timing of medications is synchronized, medication adherence rates rise up to 50% because patients can pick up their prescriptions on a single day.

Pursuant to 2017 House Concurrent Resolution 164, a working group was established which reviewed best practices for medication synchronization, including 90-day fills, pharmacist dispensing fees, patient copays, and recommended draft legislation for a medication synchronization program in Hawaii. The group consisted of six members from the pharmacy industry, health insurance industry, as well as representatives from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, and the Department of Health. This bill is a result of that collaborative effort.

We would note that we have some concerns regarding the H.D.1 version of this measure, but would ask the committee to move the bill to allow discussions to continue. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Testimony of  
John M. Kirimitsu  
Legal & Government Relations Consultant

Before:  
House Committee on Finance  
The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
The Honorable Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

February 23, 2018  
11:00 am  
Conference Room 308

**Re: HB 2145 HD1, Relating to Medication Synchronization**

Chair, Vice-Chair, and committee members thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this bill relating to medication synchronization for management of chronic diseases.

**Kaiser Permanente Hawaii supports this bill.**

Kaiser Permanente Hawaii supports this bill to synchronize the dispensing of medications for the management of chronic diseases.

In 2017, the legislature adopted House Concurrent Resolution 164 establishing a Medical Synchronization Working Group, in which Kaiser Permanente was an invited participant. This bill is the product of the collaborative efforts of that Working Group.

Thank you for your consideration.



House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Gary Tanimitsu and I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am writing to express my support for HB2145, HD1. I believe that this bill will go a long way toward ensuring that many of our kupuna touched by cancer have the coordination and access to care that allows them to get the medication they need with less difficulty.

As a kupuna, I ask for your support on this bill. I currently have a number of chronic diseases that I'm able to manage with medications. I consider myself fortunate enough to still have access to a car and am physically healthy enough to drive to the pharmacy at my convenience. I am too aware however, of friends of mine that are unable to get the medication they need in the time that they need it because they rely on family members or other friends for rides to the pharmacy due to being physically unable to drive or reliably walk to a bus stop.

I want to support this legislation because of the impact that this legislation can have for my friends, and possibly myself if I'm ever not physically able to drive at my convenience Medication synchronization will make it easier for kupuna to obtain their medication prescriptions at one time without the problems of transportation access.

I urge you to support HB2145, HD1 for all Hawaii residents that require multiple prescription drugs as a result of a chronic disease. Thank you for the consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo,  
Gary Tanimitsu

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alberto Rodriguez, and I serve as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network. I would like to submit my testimony in support of HB2145, HD1 Relating to Medication Synchronization. This bill would be a huge step in helping resolve a pressing problem in the daily lives of many patients with chronic illnesses - that of coordinating the pickup of multiple prescriptions.

Many patients, that I had the opportunity to speak with during Relay for Life events, struggle to maintain their daily routines while going into treatment. They are already stressed and anxious as a result of multiple doctors' appointments, physical therapy, missing work days, family obligations, and all the other worries that go along with a healthcare crisis. These patients should be able to get their medications in a single transaction. We know the value of time in a moment of crisis. We know how stressful and frustrating can be to pick up medications by piecemeal in multiple days. Medication synchronization provided in this bill would be a step to allow patients more time to focus on healing, family, and returning to their daily routine.

HB2145, HD1 would also reduce the instances in which a patient or their caregiver misses an important medication pick up due to a scheduling constraint. Please support medication synchronization and the health and wellbeing of your constituents by supporting HB2145, HD1.

Thank you,  
Alberto Rodriguez

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Beverly Wong and I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am writing to express my support for HB2145, HD1. I believe that this bill will go a long way toward ensuring that many of our kupuna touched by cancer have the coordination and access to care that allows them to get the medication they need with less difficulty.

As a kupuna, I ask for your support on this bill. Medication synchronization it will make it easier for kupuna to obtain their medication prescriptions at one time without the problems of transportation and standing in line on different days. Most importantly, it may alert the pharmacist if there are conflicts in the prescribed medication and allowing for improved medication adherence, enhanced patient access, increased understanding of prescription drug use, and greater pharmacist oversight.

I urge you to support HB2145, HD1 for all Hawaii residents that require multiple prescription drugs as a result of a chronic disease. Thank you for the consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo,  
Beverly Wong

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

My name is Bernie Sakoda and I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am writing to express my support for HB2145, HD1. I believe that this bill will go a long way toward ensuring that many of our residents touched by cancer have the coordination and access to care that allows them to get the medication they need with less difficulty.

I ask for your support on this bill. On our neighbor islands and throughout rural Oahu, being able to obtain medication prescriptions at one time is an essential component to ensuring that we have adequate access to care. For residents with busy schedules, the last thing they want to do is find out that they need to make several trips to the local pharmacy to necessary medications for their chronic diseases.

I urge you to support HB2145, HD1 for all Hawaii residents that require multiple prescription drugs as a result of a chronic disease. Thank you for the consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo,  
Bernie Sakoda

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

My name is Misty Figuera, and I am writing to express my support for HB2145, HD1 which would allow pharmacists to coordinate all of a patient's prescription medications to be filled on the same date each month.

I am currently a student at UH Hilo. As a twenty-one-year-old student who has a chronic disease and has also recently had surgery, I am more than familiar with the fact that life doesn't stop when cancer and chronic illness comes knocking on the door. Bills still need to be paid, family still has sport events that need to be attended, and term papers still need to be written by their due date. Life is already stressful – being sick only makes it worse. For those of us with busy schedules struggling to make it financially, the last thing you want to do is find out that you need to make several trips to the local pharmacy to get medication you need on a piecemeal basis.

Unfortunately, that is a real concern in my life. I am in a place right now where I have to push back my doctor's appointments (for seeing my surgeon and working on treating my disease) six weeks because the pharmacy was not able to better coordinate my prescriptions being filled and as a result, some of the symptoms that the prescriptions were supposed to prevent reappeared.

I cannot begin to tell you how important this is for me. Medication synchronization allows pharmacists to coordinate all of a patient's prescription medications to be filled on the same date each month. This will improve patient outcomes like mine by improving medication adherence, enhanced patient access, increased understanding of prescription drug use, and greater pharmacist oversight.

I urge you to support HB2145, HD1 for myself and so many others that are in the same place I am currently in. Thank you for the consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo,  
Misty Figuera

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Tyler Matayoshi, I work in the field of mental health and I am submitting my testimony in support of HB2145, HD1 Relating to Medication Synchronization. The passage of this bill would provide enormous relief to patients with serious and persistent mental illness by allowing them to pick up multiple prescribed medications at once.

Patients who present with serious and persistent mental illness experience a daily struggle to honor the day-to-day responsibilities others consider trivial. Those with diagnoses ranging from severe anxiety to depression to schizophrenia are often home bound and rely on medication just to step outside. This difficulty is compounded when they have multiple prescriptions with different and often strict pick-up days. It is not uncommon for them to spend an hour or more working themselves up to go outside, and picking up sorely needed medicine on a timetable is further stress they can ill afford. Medication synchronization would greatly reduce this stress by reducing these outings and allow them to focus more time on recovery.

Please support the passage of HB2145, HD1 for the sake of your constituents struggling with serious mental illness.

Mahalo,  
Tyler Matayoshi

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Jenny Hausler, and I am a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. I am writing to express my support for HB2145, HD1, which would allow pharmacists to coordinate all of a patient's prescription medications to be filled on the same date each month.

I have served as a caregiver to many family members that have suffered from cancer, including my husband and my sister. During the course of treatment, one of the big factors that cancer patients and their caregivers have to endure is the stress of coordinating care around this terrible disease, and knowing that there's still everyday life that has to be taken care of. Bills still need to be paid, and children and grandchildren still need to be cared for. The last thing you want to do is find out that you need to make several trips to the local pharmacy to get medication you need on a piecemeal basis.

As a caregiver, I want to make sure that so many other caregivers and cancer patients in our state can take the inconvenience of multiple trips to the pharmacist out of the way. Medication synchronization allows pharmacists to coordinate all of a patient's prescription medications to be filled on the same date each month. This will improve patient outcomes by improving medication adherence, enhanced patient access, increased understanding of prescription drug use, and greater pharmacist oversight.

I urge you to support HB2145, HD1, relating to medical synchronization. Thank you for the consideration of my testimony.

Mahalo,  
Jenny Hausler

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Stella Ye Eun Lee, and I serve as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network. I would like to submit my testimony in support of HB2145, HD1 Relating to Medication Synchronization. This bill would be a huge step in helping resolve a pressing problem in the daily lives of many patients with chronic illnesses - that of coordinating the pickup of multiple prescriptions.

Many patients, members of my family included, struggle to maintain some sort of familiarity in their daily lives during treatment. There is already stress of multiple doctors' appointments, the loss of stamina to accomplish work and family obligations, and all the other worries that go along with a healthcare crisis. Trying to ensure that multiple medication pickups are also handled can reach the bounds of many families' ability to cope. Even those whose conditions are well maintained, still have to juggle multiple pickups for prescriptions whose renewals are not concurrent. Medication synchronization provided in this bill would be a step to allow patients more time to focus on healing, family, and returning to a sense of normalcy. It would remove the stress of having to make many trips to a pharmacy that, in more rural areas, can be a long drive away.

HB2145, HD1 would also reduce the instances in which a patient or their caregiver misses an important medication pick up due to a scheduling constraint. Please support medication synchronization and the health and wellbeing of your constituents by supporting HB2145, HD1.

Thank you,  
Stella Ye Eun Lee



House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Patrick Tran, and I serve as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network. I would like to submit my testimony in support of HB2145, HD1 Relating to Medication Synchronization. This bill would be a huge step in helping resolve a pressing problem in the daily lives of many patients with chronic illnesses - that of coordinating the pickup of multiple prescriptions.

Many patients, members of my family included, struggle to maintain some sort of familiarity in their daily lives during treatment. There is already stress of multiple doctors' appointments, the loss of stamina to accomplish work and family obligations, and all the other worries that go along with a healthcare crisis. Trying to ensure that multiple medication pickups are also handled can reach the bounds of many families' ability to cope. Even those whose conditions are well maintained, still have to juggle multiple pickups for prescriptions whose renewals are not concurrent. Medication synchronization provided in this bill would be a step to allow patients more time to focus on healing, family, and returning to a sense of normalcy. It would remove the stress of having to make many trips to a pharmacy that, in more rural areas, can be a long drive away.

HB2145, HD1 would also reduce the instances in which a patient or their caregiver misses an important medication pick up due to a scheduling constraint. Please support medication synchronization and the health and wellbeing of your constituents by supporting HB2145, HD1.

Thank you,  
Patrick Tran

House Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice-Chair

RE: HB2145, HD1 RELATING TO MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION

Aloha Chair Luke and other members of the committee,

My name is Molly Pierce, and I serve as a volunteer for the American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network. I would like to submit my testimony in support of HB2145, HD1 Relating to Medication Synchronization. This bill would be a huge step in helping resolve a pressing problem in the daily lives of many patients with chronic illnesses - that of coordinating the pickup of multiple prescriptions.

Many patients, members of my family included, struggle to maintain some sort of familiarity in their daily lives during treatment. There is already stress of multiple doctors' appointments, the loss of stamina to accomplish work and family obligations, and all the other worries that go along with a healthcare crisis. Trying to ensure that multiple medication pickups are also handled can reach the bounds of many families' ability to cope. Even those whose conditions are well maintained, still have to juggle multiple pickups for prescriptions whose renewals are not concurrent. Medication synchronization provided in this bill would be a step to allow patients more time to focus on healing, family, and returning to a sense of normalcy. It would remove the stress of having to make many trips to a pharmacy that, in more rural areas, can be a long drive away.

HB2145, HD1 would also reduce the instances in which a patient or their caregiver misses an important medication pick up due to a scheduling constraint. Please support medication synchronization and the health and wellbeing of your constituents by supporting HB2145, HD1.

Thank you,  
Molly Pierce