



Rob Horowitz, Prevent Opioid Abuse

In Favor of S3259

I am submitting written testimony in favor of S3259 on behalf of Prevent Opioid Abuse, a national organization working to educate patients and parents about the risks of opioid-based pain relievers and the availability of non-opioid alternatives. Let me begin by thanking Chair Murray for introducing this legislation, which includes essential prevention measures.

S3259 puts in place a 7-day limit on initial opioid pain killer prescription, updating the current state requirement. Given that research shows that dependence begins to set in for some patients in as little as 5 days, this provision is a critical safeguard.

Additionally, it requires a non-opioid pain treatment first approach, which conforms to current best medical practice. Blind pain studies show that for acute pain a combination of ibuprofen (Motrin) acetaminophen (Tylenol) provides effective pain relief in most cases. In fact, a Rutgers Health study found that this combination is more effective at controlling acute pain following wisdom teeth extraction than opioid medication. Now, there are also non-opioid prescription pain medications on the market.

Importantly, S3259 reaffirms the state's requirement for a conversation between medical practitioner before an opioid painkiller is prescribed to warn about the risks of addiction and discuss nonopioid alternatives. This is potentially life-saving information that every patient and in the case of minors, parent has the right to know.

I urge the Health Committee to support S3259, and to expeditiously move it out of Committee, so it can be one step closer to passage.