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March 29, 2023
The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor
New Mexico State Capitol
490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Re: Urging Your Signature for HB 73--Biomarker Testing Insurance Requirements (Reps. Dixon and Garratt)

Dear Governor Lujan Grisham:

We urge you to sign into law HB 73—Biomarker Testing Insurance Requirements, introduced by Reps. Dixon and Garratt, that was passed overwhelmingly by bipartisan majorities in the legislature (28-12 in the Senate and 51-14 in the House). This bill will ensure that those New Mexicans covered by state-regulated insurance plans, and Medicaid, will be covered for biomarker testing when medically appropriate.

HB 73 has received consistent support throughout the legislative process. It is an excellent example of a bill with solid bipartisan approval that should become law to improve the healthcare of all New Mexicans.

The Autoimmune Association leads the fight against autoimmune disease by collaborating to improve healthcare, advance research, and support the community through every step of the journey. For over 30 years, the Autoimmune Association has been a pioneer in serving autoimmune patients, sponsoring research, advocating for access to healthcare, and fostering collaboration to identify and explore the common threads that link autoimmune diseases.

Autoimmune and immune-mediated conditions remain poorly understood; despite many recent advances in treatment options, patients still struggle. One of the most significant challenges faced by autoimmune patients is getting an accurate and timely diagnosis. Many autoimmune patients spend years going to different doctors and specialists before getting diagnosed. This can lead to delays in treatment and worse health outcomes for many patients. Biomarker testing can give autoimmune patients the accurate and timely diagnoses they need.

Recent advances in biomarker testing allow patients with many autoimmune conditions to receive rapid diagnosis. This takes a process that could have lasted months or even years to one that lasts mere weeks.¹ Biomarker testing is now effective in screening for a wide range of autoimmune and immune-mediated conditions, including Chron's Disease, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Sjogren's, and Lupus.² Early detection of these and other autoimmune conditions can mean the difference for many patients.

HB 73 ensures access to biomarker testing for the most vulnerable autoimmune patients. It will go a long way to reducing health disparities in the treatment of autoimmune and immune-mediated conditions.

On behalf of New Mexicans living with autoimmune and immune-mediated conditions, we thank you for your consideration of this vital piece of legislation.

¹ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16298911/#:~:text=The%20goal%20of%20studies%20of,device%20for%20therapeutic%20drug%20efficacy.>

² <https://www.onsimmune.com/applications/autoimmune-diseases/>

Sincerely,

Quardricos B. Driskell

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Vice President of Public Policy and Public Affairs

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