



Students for Patient Advocacy Nationwide

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The Honorable Sharon Cooper, Chair

House Health and Human Services Committee

March 23, 2026

Re: Georgia H.B. 334 (Gullett) - Support

Dear Chairwoman Cooper and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee,

Students for Patient Advocacy Nationwide (SPAN) appreciates the intent of Georgia H.B. 334, which aims to require annual review and evaluation of Medicaid coverage for sickle cell disease treatments to ensure that patients receive adequate and up-to-date care. As an organization that is devoted to improving balanced, patient-first medical networks that are reachable and flexible to evolving medical needs, we are able to recognize the necessity of legislative measures that address the disparities in chronic disease treatment and access to care.

Sickle cell disease affects an estimated 100,000 people across the United States. Within the Black or African American community, the statistics are even more striking; roughly one in 365 births is impacted. However, despite the widespread nature of the condition, its prevalence does not exempt patients from facing harsh realities. Barriers like outdated treatment protocols, limited access to specialists, and inequalities in services for managing pain and preventing complications significantly hinder care. Many individuals with sickle cell disease rely on Medicaid for coverage, making state-level policy an undeniable influence on patient outcomes.

While we acknowledge and commend the efforts behind Georgia H.B. 334, we are writing today to respectfully support the bill and highlight opportunities to further strengthen its impact; ensuring it serves the communities it intends to support to the full extent.

We are most particularly heartened by the bill's provisions which require annual review, public input, and transparent reporting. These create a strong framework for accountability and responsiveness in Medicaid coverage.

To enhance these efforts further, we would like to propose the following amendment:

Amendment Proposal #1: Require inclusion of patient-reported outcomes and youth perspectives in the annual review process

Add language directing the Department of Community Health to specifically incorporate patient-reported outcomes and feedback from youth and young adults living with sickle cell disease when conducting annual reviews. This would ensure that coverage decisions reflect lived experiences and the unique needs of younger populations transitioning through care systems.

These updates would bring the bill closer to achieving truly patient-centered care while enhancing health equity and ensuring that Medicaid coverage doesn't lag behind clinical advancements or the practical needs of families. As a student-led group advocating for evidence-based, equitable policies nationwide,



SPAN is deeply invested in the success of H.B. 334. We want this legislation to rise to the occasion and genuinely serve the communities it targets.

Finally, we respectfully request that the committee weigh this amendment as part of its review before finalising the bill. If additional discussions or insights are needed, we remain ready and willing to assist.

Sincerely,

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