January 24, 2017

House Committee on Health and Human Services
Kansas House of Representatives
Kansas State Capitol, Room 521-E, Seat 7
300 SW 10th St, Topeka, KS 66612

Re: H.B. 2107 – Relating to the regulation of biosimilar medications

Dear Honorable Chairman Hawkins and Committee Members,

The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) is a national organization composed of approximately 35 state and regional professional rheumatology societies. CSRO formed by physicians to ensure excellence and access to the highest quality care for patients with rheumatologic, autoimmune, and musculoskeletal disease.

Rheumatologists are on the forefront of treatments for patients with autoimmune diseases. With the advent of biologic medications, we have been able to stop the progression of some of these diseases and avoid the development of life-long deformities. Biological products available for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and other autoimmune diseases have had a significant impact on improving our patients' quality of life, preventing deformities, disability and lowering mortality.

As you consider H.B. 2107, CSRO wishes to convey its support for this important legislation.

This bill provides important pathways for access to these unique medications. It also creates much needed patient safety rules including for dispensing pharmacists to communicate with physicians about biosimilar substitutions within 5 days. Requiring this communication as quickly as possible provides physicians an opportunity to counter and correctly report any adverse effects of medications.

With FDA approval of biosimilars, biological products continue to be of growing importance for rheumatology patients. CSRO supports the safe introduction of interchangeable biologic drugs into the practice of medicine in Kansas and urges the passage of H.B. 2107.

Respectfully,

Michael P. Stevens
President
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

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