

Chairman Vickrey and Members of the House Committee on Insurance,

My name is Jonathan Cole and I am a volunteer with RESULTS, an organization founded to bring about the end to poverty all across the world. I want to first thank you all for your dedication to serving the people of Kansas. This job is certainly a tough one and deserves recognition.

It is almost every day that we hear about the rising cost of medicine. Recently, a Heather and Tres Biggs from Coffeyville shared their story of how Tres was sent to jail for inability to pay their medical bills. Not only is their story abhorrent, we know that their story is not alone.

As healthcare costs continue to rise, we can see the effects radiate to essential, life-saving medication. In particular, the price of insulin has gone from \$35 in 2001, to \$275 in 2019, according to the American Journal of Managed Care. At the same time, it is estimated that the cost of production for a vial of insulin is anywhere between \$2 to \$4.

When Frederick Banting first synthesized insulin, he did a number of things. First, he refused to put his name on the patent. Secondly, he sold the patent for \$1, saying that all who need it should have access to this life-saving medicine. He believed it went against the Hippocratic oath to make a huge profit off of something so vital to so many.

It is reported that 1 in 4 people with diabetes have “cost-related underuse,” meaning they ration how much insulin they use to cut costs. As a result, these people can suffer from nerve damage, blindness, or even death. No one should be in this predicament.

In several states across the nation, there has been bipartisan work to bring down the cost of insulin. Both Colorado and Illinois have passed legislation on a bipartisan basis to put an out-of-pocket price cap on insulin. Likewise, Virginia and Tennessee are considering legislation to do the same thing. On the national level, Sen. Grassley (R-IA) and Sen. Wyden (D-OR) have recently been investigating the price gouging of insulin in hopes to bring justice to Americans everywhere.

You all are in a position to help Kansans everywhere. By considering putting an out-of-pocket price cap on the cost of insulin, this will help reduce the outrageous cost of life-saving insulin. My ask is that you pass H.B. 2557 out of committee and urge your colleagues to support the legislation on the House floor.