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October 2, 2015

The Honorable Mike Callton
Chairman, House Health Policy Committee
Anderson House Office Building,
P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Support House Bill 4812 (Bizon) – Regulating the use of Interchangeable Biological Drug Products

Dear Representative Callton:

The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) is a national organization composed of more than 30 state and regional professional rheumatology societies formed in order to advocate and ensure excellence and access to the highest quality care for patients with rheumatologic, autoimmune, and musculoskeletal disease.

Rheumatologists are on the forefront of utilizing the dramatic long-term, life-changing clinical improvements that biological products have on Americans. 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 disability, and lowering mortality.

As you consider HB 4812, 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 for dispensing pharmacists to communicate with physicians about biosimilar substitutions within 5 business days. Requiring this communication as quickly as possible provides physicians a consistent window to counter and correctly report any adverse effects of medications.

With FDA approval of the very first biosimilar drug in March, 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 Michigan and urges passage of HB 4812.

Sincerely,



Michael Schweitz, MD
President
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations