



Physicians Caring for Texans

**House Insurance Committee**  
**Testimony by Pradeep Kumar, MD, Texas Medical Association**  
**House Bill 1647 (Prohibition on White-Bagging) by Rep. Cody Harris**  
*March 28, 2023*

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chair Johnson, and committee members, for allowing me to testify today. My name is Dr. Pradeep Kumar, and I am a gastroenterologist in Austin. I will be testifying on behalf of TMA and its more than 57,000 members across the state in support of House Bill 1647.

The medical community has seen an increase in the methods of “white-bagging” related to patient care that requires regular treatment with clinician-administered drugs. White-bagging is the practice of requiring a drug be purchased through a specialty pharmacy and shipped directly to the physician, rather than being shipped to the physician’s pharmacy of choice. In cancer treatment, for instance, this can negatively impact patient care, because it limits the flexibility needed when administering cancer drugs. Each patient is unique and may need adjustments to the course of treatment even on the day of the patient’s appointment.

Aside from the patient safety concerns and potential care delays, these practices also can lead to a shift in cost-sharing onto the patient, as the health plan can shift him or her to an outpatient pharmacy benefit from an inpatient benefit.

This legislation would be a great step towards reducing the interference by health benefit plan issuers and pharmacy benefit managers in patients’ and physicians’ choice of medication needed to treat serious conditions.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman and committee members for allowing me to testify today in support of HB 1647. I appreciate your work to remove burdens to patients getting the medications they need to live healthy, productive lives. I am happy to answer any questions.