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Rep. Lindsey Holmes

Rep. Les Gara

Dear Representatives;

I am writing to you both today, I am in Rep. Holmes district , and because Rep. Gara is the author of the bill I am concerned about. Namely HB11 for screening colonoscopies. As you can see from the letterhead, I work for 2 gastroenterologists and deal with insurance companies on a daily basis. A most frustrating aspect of health care in this field is to get patients to come in early for screening which , as we know, if done early can save lives. To compound this issue is the fact that not only does ALASKA CARE –underwriter WELLS FARGO- not cover screening colonoscopies for retirees, but they have lumped HISTORY of colon polyps, family history of colon polyps or colon cancer and even PERSONAL history of colon cancer into the category of “screening”! So unless the patient has an ongoing problem or symptom they are not covered. I have spoken to insurance clerks and they care nothing of the patient’s well being only their companies bottom line. So we are left to wait for symptoms to appear or LIE so coverage is forthcoming. As a nurse this is not what I had envisioned as my career path in PATIENT CARE.

Therefore, I urge you to not let this bill be dropped or ignored or tabled to some date in the distant future. These patients worked long and hard for the state- shouldn’t the state work for them now?

Most sincerely,

Renae Raskovich, LPN