

May 6, 2025

House Insurance Committee  
Texas House of Representatives  
PO Box 2910  
Austin, Texas 78768

**RE: Support for HB 5178 (Biomarker Testing Coverage)**

Dear Chair Jay Dean, Vice Chair Hubert Vo, and Members of the House Insurance Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Association of Women in Rheumatology (AWIR) and all our Texas Chapters to express our strong support for Texas House Bill 5178, which seeks to ensure coverage for biomarker testing in the state of Texas. T

Biomarker testing allows us to personalize treatment plans for our patients by identifying specific biological markers that can predict how an individual may respond to certain medications. This tailored approach is particularly important in rheumatology, where each patient's disease can manifest differently and respond variably to treatment. By utilizing biomarker testing, we can significantly reduce the trial-and-error process currently required to find the right drug for the right patient. This means that patients can begin effective treatment sooner, leading to improved health outcomes and quality of life.

Furthermore, the integration of biomarker testing into patient care has the potential to generate considerable cost savings for both patients and the healthcare system. The current landscape often results in the prescription of multiple treatments before finding one that is effective, which can lead to increased medical expenses and an unnecessary burden on patients who are already dealing with chronic conditions. By supporting HB 5178, we can facilitate a more efficient treatment process, minimizing unnecessary prescriptions and the associated costs, while also reducing the potential for adverse drug reactions that can arise from ineffective treatments.

Coverage of biomarker testing is not just a matter of improving individual patient care, it is also a step toward a more evidence-based and cost-effective healthcare system. Ensuring that rheumatologists have access to these vital tests means we can provide the best possible care to our patients, streamline treatment protocols, and allocate resources more effectively.

We urge you to support HB 5178, which will provide the necessary coverage for biomarker testing. This legislation is essential for enhancing patient care in rheumatology, reducing unnecessary healthcare expenditures, and leading the way toward better health outcomes for Texans.

Thank you for considering this important matter.

Respectfully,

**Gwenesta Melton, MD**

Vice President

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**Stephanie Ott, MD**

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