

January 05, 2021

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor
77 South High Street
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Governor DeWine:

ERIC kindly asks that you sign into law HB 388, a bill recently passed by the legislature which will protect Ohioans from surprise medical billing. The ERISA Industry Committee, or ERIC, is the only national association that advocates exclusively for large employers on health, retirement, and compensation public policies at the federal, state, and local levels. ERIC member companies are leaders in every sector of the economy, with employees in every state, and we represent them in their capacity as sponsors of employee benefit plans for their own workforce.

Ohioans are likely to engage with an ERIC member company when they drive a car or fill it with gas, use a cell phone or a computer, visit a bank or hotel, fly on an airplane, watch TV, benefit from our national defense, go shopping, receive, or send a package, wear makeup, or enjoy a soft drink.

ERIC applauds the Ohio Legislature for passing a bipartisan, comprehensive solution that protects patients' access to care, ends the surprise billing crisis, ensures fair provider compensation, and does so without driving up health insurance costs. HB 388 creates a reasonable, market-based benchmark in surprise billing situations, taking the patient out of the middle, and providing certainty to patients, providers, and employers. This is a fair solution, that does not inappropriately "tip the scales" in favor of one sector over another – even so, it addresses some of the deep iniquities currently present in the health care system. Those iniquities have resulted in a system in which, right now, there are winners and losers – and the losers are patients (along with the employer paying on their behalf). HB 388 brings needed fairness and clarity where currently both are lacking.

As I am sure you are aware of the Federal Government passing its surprise billing legislation earlier in the week, we understand your concern about this bill creating duplicative or burdensome regulations on health care providers. However, the federal bill is designed to work in a complementary fashion with state solutions such as HB 388. Ohio's legislation will save money for patients and employers in Ohio, and will ensure a simple, straightforward, fair resolution to situations involving surprise medical bills for patients in fully-insured plans.

ERIC is standing by to help if you have any questions, or if we can be a resource in any way. Please contact me at aguariscofildes@eric.org or 202-627-1910.

Thank you for your consideration,



Annette Guarisco Fildes,
President and CEO