

KRISTINE HOWARD, MEMBER
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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

August 3, 2023

Katie Merritt
Director of Policy and Planning
Office of Insurance Commissioner
1326 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Director Merritt:

I urge you to add coverage of EpiPens to Pennsylvania's essential health benefits (EHB) package.

Under the Affordable Care Act, individual and small group (50 or fewer employees) health insurance policies must cover the ten categories of EHBs. Each state can select a benchmark plan to describe what specific benefits must be included in each EHB category.

Pennsylvania is behind the times. We have not updated our benchmark plan since 2017. The Insurance Department's reevaluation of Pennsylvania's EHB package shows the department's commitment to ensuring consumers get the care they need, when they need it.

Many Pennsylvanians need EpiPens to survive severe allergic reactions, and no one with severe allergies should be forced to risk their lives because their health insurance doesn't cover EpiPens. That's why I introduced House Bill 429. However, the legislative process takes time, and the Insurance Department can move much more swiftly to ensure coverage of EpiPens is included in individual and small group policies by updating Pennsylvania's EHB package.

Thus, I urge you to ensure coverage of EpiPens, as contemplated in my House Bill 429, is included in any update to Pennsylvania's EHB package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristine C. Howard".

Rep. Kristine Howard
167th Legislative District