

**Prepared Testimony of Jessica Intermill to the
Health Finance and Policy Committee
in support of HF 17, the Prescription Drug Affordability Act, Jan. 20, 2023**

My name is Jessica Intermill. I live in Minneapolis with my husband and daughter and write to support passage of HF 17.

I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis over 10 years ago when I was 7 months pregnant. It was 22 days before I delivered our daughter. I have never been a chronic-illness patient who is not a mother. And my daughter never has and never will have a mother who is healthy.

The closest I can come to healthy is to inject myself with biologic medication every week. It's not a cure. There is no cure. But it has stopped my body from eating holes the size of buckshot into my bones. It allows me to be the wife, mom, neighbor, small-business person, and citizen that others in my community depend on.

But *even with insurance*, the manufacturer of this drug charges consumers \$4,405.71 per month. That's \$150 per day for this medicine. Every. Single. Day. And the drug company can—and has—raised the price over time. I'm truly grateful that I've found a medication that controls my disease. But my family needs your help. Without your intervention, I don't know how long we can afford to pay this always-increasing ransom.

I've heard folks say that this bill will hurt patients like me by making the market anti-competitive, but this market already lacks competition. Medication is not like shoes. There is not a single other manufacturer who sells this drug, of course it gouges consumers.

I can't go anywhere else.

If I do not purchase this drug, my body will once again eat buckshot-sized holes in itself, and inflammation will attack every one of my organs. Consumers can't say no to the drugs that

they need to live their lives. I can't say no to a drug priced more than *four times as much as my mortgage*.

But you can. You can say no. You can work to pass HF 17 and ensure that drug prices are reasonable and families like mine can afford our own lives.

Thank you for your consideration and support.