



January 25, 2024

Washington House of Representatives
Health Care & Wellness Committee
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Re: Letter of Support for the Disease-Agnostic Biomarker Testing Bill (HB1450)

Dear Health Care & Wellness Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Aimed Alliance, a not-for-profit health policy organization that seeks to protect and enhance the rights of health care consumers and providers, to express our support for the original form of House Bill 1450 relating to coverage for biomarker testing. This legislation, in its initial, disease-agnostic version, holds immense promise in advancing medical diagnostics and personalized treatment options for individuals facing various health challenges.

Biomarker testing is a crucial mechanism for gathering individualized information essential for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases.¹ This personalized data is derived by analyzing biological specimens, such as tissue and blood from patients, to detect key biomarkers such as genetic anomalies and molecular indicators.² Expanding insurance coverage for biomarker testing is a pivotal step toward enhancing accessibility to this indispensable diagnostic tool. The identification of specific biomarkers empowers practitioners to tailor treatments to individual patients, minimizing unnecessary interventions and maximizing therapeutic benefits.³

While significant strides in biomarker testing have been made in areas like oncology, its potential extends far beyond cancer diagnosis and treatment. There is a rapidly growing body of evidence highlighting its clinical benefits across a diverse spectrum of diseases and chronic illnesses, including conditions such as preeclampsia,⁴ cardiovascular diseases,⁵ diabetes,⁶

¹ Ali Bodaghi et al., *Biomarkers: Promising and valuable tools towards diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of Covid-19 and other diseases*, 9 *Helyion* e13323 (2023).

² Biomarker Testing, *Oncology Nursing Society*, <https://www.ons.org/genomics-taxonomy/biomarker-testing>.

³ Biomarker Tests and Cancer Treatment, *American Cancer Society*, <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/diagnosis-staging/tests/biomarker-tests.html>.

⁴ Thermo Fisher, *Scientific Announces FDA Clearance of Breakthrough Immunoassays to Aid in the Risk Assessment of Preeclampsia*, *Businesswire* (2023), <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230519005071/en/Thermo-Fisher-Scientific-Announces-FDA-Clearance-of-Breakthrough-Immunoassays-to-Aid-in-the-Risk-Assessment-of-Preeclampsia>.

⁵ Crystal Ghantous et al., *Advances in Cardiovascular Biomarker Discovery*, 8 *Biomedicines* 552 (2020), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7759775/>

⁶ Brenda Dorcely et al., *Novel biomarkers for prediabetes, diabetes, and associated complications*, *Diabetes, 10 Metabolic Syndrome and Obesity* 345–61 (2017), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5565252/>



neurodegenerative disorders,⁷ and autoimmune diseases.⁸ For instance, the FDA recently approved a biomarker test for preeclampsia in 2023, enabling health care professionals to identify pregnant individuals at the highest risk of preeclampsia, leading to better management of this condition and improved outcomes for both mothers and their newborns.⁹

These innovative applications of biomarker testing can contribute to improved patient outcomes, reduced healthcare costs, and enhanced quality of life.¹⁰ The potential impact of biomarker testing on disease prevention, early detection, and precision treatment strategies spans a wide range of medical conditions, and the disease-agnostic language in the original bill ensures that we embrace a holistic approach to biomarker testing. This approach promotes innovation and progress across multiple medical specialties. By focusing solely on cancer, we risk missing opportunities to leverage these advancements in other medical fields. We urge you to advocate for the passage of the original version of HB 1450 to ensure that our health care system remains at the forefront of technological advancements.

In conclusion, we respectfully urge you to recognize the substantial benefits of biomarker testing in enhancing health outcomes and to endorse this legislation for the residents of Washington. We sincerely appreciate your time and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ashira Vantrees
Counsel

⁷ *Blood Biomarkers in Neurodegenerative Diseases: Implications for the Clinical Neurologist*, 101 *Neurology* (2023), <https://n.neurology.org/content/101/4/172#:~:text=The%20most%20rigorously%20studied%20blood,detect%20AD%20in%20older%20adults>.

⁸ Fenghe Zhang et al., *Biomarkers in autoimmune diseases of the central nervous system*, 114 *Frontiers in Immunology* (2023), <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fimmu.2023.1111719/full#:~:text=They%20are%20easy%20to%20quantify,of%20disability%20in%20clinical%20practice>.

⁹ Thermo Fisher, *Scientific Announces FDA Clearance of Breakthrough Immunoassays to Aid in the Risk Assessment of Preeclampsia*, *Businesswire*.

¹⁰ *Biomarker Testing and Cost Savings*, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (Jan. 25, 2023), <https://www.fightcancer.org/news/biomarker-testing-and-cost-savings-1#:~:text=Timely%20access%20to%20guideline%2Dindicated,biomarkers%20based%20on%20clinical%20guidelines>.