



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **FOR GRACE EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT OVER GOVERNOR BROWN'S VETO OF LANDMARK HEALTH LEGISLATION THAT WOULD HAVE HELPED CALIFORNIANS LIVING WITH CHRONIC PAIN TO ACCESS TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE CARE**

*For Grace-Sponsored Legislation Would Have Limited Practice of Step Therapy; Ensured that  
Millions of Californians with Chronic Pain Could Access Critical Treatments*

LOS ANGELES (October 1, 2012) – For Grace, a Los Angeles-based non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the ethical and equal treatment of all women in pain, today expressed its profound disappointment that California Governor Jerry Brown vetoed AB 369, a landmark health bill that would have provided relief to millions of California chronic pain sufferers. Authored by Assembly Member Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael) and sponsored by For Grace, AB 369 would have prohibited California health plans from requiring pain patients to try and fail on more than two treatments before allowing the patient access to the pain treatment originally prescribed by their doctor. The bill would also have allowed physicians to determine the duration of each “step.”

“This is terribly disappointing. AB 369 was an excellent bill that would have made a better day for over 7 million people with pain in California, and signing it would have been the humane thing to do,” said Cynthia Toussaint, sponsor of AB 369 and founder and spokesperson of For Grace. “We at For Grace, along with our author, Assembly Member Jared Huffman, gave Governor Brown an excellent opportunity to help the California pain community get treated more quickly and effectively. Over the four years of getting this bill to the Governor's desk, we expanded its support from strictly Democrats to a bi-partisan effort which in this day and age is no small feat.”

“Step therapy is an unethical practice used by health insurers to save money on the backs of patients. For Grace vows to continue fighting for the ethical and equal treatment of all women in pain to help ensure that they have access to the care they need,” added Toussaint.

The new law would have curbed the widespread health insurer policy of step therapy or “fail first,” which requires pain patients to try and fail up to five older, less-effective medicines before receiving access to the treatment one prescribed by their physician. The policy is dangerous to patient health and increases the direct cost of health care in the long run due to additional doctor visits, unscheduled hospital admissions, excessive use of emergency rooms, and loss of employment.

According to the U.S. Institute of Medicine, more than 100 million people in America are affected by chronic pain every year, which is more than the number of Americans who are affected by cancer, heart disease and diabetes combined. Pain costs this nation \$635 billion yearly in medical treatment expenses and lost productivity.

### **About For Grace**

Founded in 2002, For Grace is a nonprofit organization passionately devoted to ensuring the ethical and equal treatment of all women in pain. Their main goal is to increase awareness of the gender disparity women experience worldwide in the assessment and treatment of their pain. For Grace provides the foundation for women to have their pain managed effectively and without bias through self-empowerment, public awareness, healthcare professional education, and legislative advocacy. [www.forgrace.org](http://www.forgrace.org)

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