



Prescription
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Prescription Justice

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Taking on the Crisis of High Drug Prices in America®

June 7, 2017

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

Our organizations have come together in support of the Affordable and Safe Prescription Drug Importation Act of 2017, which would help lower the cost of medications for the American people. Pharmaceutical corporations unfairly use their monopoly power to maintain astronomical prescription drug costs in America. For most unaffordable prescription drugs in America, there is an identically safe and more affordable option in Canada, and other advanced economies. This bill proposes deficit-neutral reforms that would allow individuals, pharmacies and wholesalers to import FDA-approved medications from Canada, and then, after two years, from other countries with equally rigorous systems for regulating the safety and efficacy of pharmaceuticals. The time has come to move forward with action, not just words, to provide the American people with access to lower prescription drug prices.

In 2016, 45 million Americans did not fill a prescription, because they could not afford it. According to a survey conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health and the Kaiser Family Foundation, more than half of all Americans who do not take prescription medications because of high costs report becoming sicker. This means that potentially 22.5 million Americans become sicker each year because they can't afford their prescription medication. The high price of prescription drugs is a public health crisis.

Despite the federal restrictions, millions of Americans already import life-saving medications for their own use. While this practice can be done safely through properly credentialed international online pharmacies, it poses a real danger to patient safety because of rogue Internet drug sellers. Preventing Americans from buying affordable medication is clearly the wrong thing to do, which is why individuals are not prosecuted for small personal use quantity imports. By passing this bill, Congress would require the FDA to provide guidance to consumers about finding safe international online pharmacies. This provision would help consumers find the safest options, while going after bad actors who intentionally sell counterfeit and adulterated medications.

New importation rules to expand access to more affordable and safe medication is not a panacea to the problem of unaffordable pharmaceutical pricing in the U.S. – but it provides a much-

needed solution for Americans who, in the tens of millions, have had to choose between medicines and basic necessities, such as food and rent.

For the reasons stated above, we urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Retired Americans
Center for Medicare Advocacy
CREDO
DailyKos
Economic Policy Institute Policy Center
Justice in Aging
National Nurses United
National Organization for Women
PharmacyChecker.com
Prescription Justice
RxRights
Social Security Works