

Co-Sponsor the Improving Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs Act

Endorsed By: by the Alliance for Retired Americans, AFSCME, American Medical Student Association (AMSA), National Physicians Alliance, Housing Works, Other98, Public Citizen, Social Security Works, MoveOn, National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and PFAM: People of Faith for Access to Medicines.

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to become a co-sponsor of the Improving Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs Act, which would lower drug prices for patients and taxpayers, while spurring innovation.

Prescription drug spending has reached a crisis point. In the commercial market, overall drug costs increased by 15.8% in 2015 – more than double the increase in overall health care costs. Both Medicare Parts B and D have seen their drug costs double in recent years. Drug costs for Medicaid enrollees continue to grow at an alarming rate. Moreover, a 2016 AARP study of widely used brand name drugs found that 97% had price increases that exceeded inflation.

These are not isolated incidents and cannot be attributed to a few blockbuster drugs coming to market – this is a systematic problem that requires an aggressive, comprehensive solution. That is why we are introducing the Improving Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs Act. This legislation would:

- Improve transparency around drug pricing and drug manufacturing.
- Allow Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices in Part D and require negotiation for certain high-cost drugs.
- Deter drug corporations from drastically raising the price of their drugs.
- Accelerate closure of the Medicare Part D Donut Hole.
- Allow for importation of safe prescription drugs.
- Restore rebates for drugs dispensed to low-income Medicare beneficiaries, as in Medicaid.
- Cap out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs in private insurance plans.
- Publicly fund clinical trials and create a new prize fund for antibiotics to spur innovation.
- Reduce monopolies for brand-name drugs and help generic competitors come to market more easily.
- End pay-for-delay agreements.
- Eliminate the tax break for drug corporations for direct-to-consumer advertising.

It is time for Congress to act to reduce drug prices, and the American people agree. A recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll found that 77% of Americans believe the price of drugs is unreasonable. Please join us in working to improve the affordability of prescription drug prices by co-sponsoring the Improving Access to Affordable Prescription Drugs Act. To do so, please contact Amy Kelbick (Schakowsky) at amy.kelbick@mail.house.gov, Ali Golden (Cummings) at Alexandra.Golden@mail.house.gov, Elise Ackley (DeLauro) at elise.ackley@mail.house.gov, or Isaac Loeb (Welch) at Isaac.loeb@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress

Peter Welch
Member of Congress