

May 10, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy, Minority Leader McConnell, and Members of the 117th Congress,

In his address to a joint session of Congress, President Biden urgently affirmed his support for lowering prescription drug prices, saying, “Let's do what we've always talked about for all the years I was down here in this body, in Congress. Let's give Medicare the power to save hundreds of billions of dollars by negotiating lower drug prescription prices. . . It's within our power to do it; let's do it now.”

As patients, advocates, and membership organizations that represent a broad range of constituencies struggling to afford prescriptions for everything from diabetes to rare cancers, we could not agree more with the President's call for long-overdue reform. Now we need action. That is why we ask you and your congressional colleagues to pass meaningful legislation now to lower drug prices.

The American people, from both sides of the aisle, overwhelmingly support congressional action to lower the price of prescription drugs. Over one-third of Americans cannot afford the medications their physicians have prescribed them, forcing them to ration care by splitting doses or to go without life-saving drugs altogether. Others are forgoing other necessities or racking up debt in order to pay for needed medications.

Americans should not face prices that are nearly three times what people in other countries pay when there are ready solutions available to make those medicines affordable. Nearly 90 percent of Americans believe addressing drug prices should be a top priority for Congress this year, including 95 percent of Democrats and 81 percent of Republicans.

The Lower Drug Costs Now Act (H.R. 3), passed by the House last year and reintroduced in the 117th Congress, would save taxpayers more than \$450 billion and lower out-of-pocket costs for patients by authorizing Medicare negotiations, setting inflationary price caps, and limiting out-of-pocket costs. Lower prices would be extended to the private sector,

where employers are struggling to manage the ever-rising costs of drugs. It is a comprehensive set of reforms that will fundamentally reform America's drug pricing system to ensure it works for the people it is supposed to serve.

Exorbitant drug prices are creating severe hardship for millions of American families, whether they are insured or uninsured. Skyrocketing prices disproportionately impact seniors, people with disabilities, and people of color. The high price of medicines drives up premiums, creates more burdens for small businesses and employers, and increases overall health care costs. That's why, as the President noted in his speech, we need policies that lower prices for everyone.

Americans across the board need lawmakers in Congress to pass legislation to lower drug prices this year. As a recent poll demonstrated, the majority of Americans are afraid that Congress will do too little to address this crisis. We urge you to allay their fears and alleviate the suffering of millions by acting soon to pass meaningful legislation, starting with House passage of H.R. 3.

We look forward to working with you in this critical effort.

Signed:

AARP

AFL-CIO

Alliance for Retired Americans

Center for American Progress

Community Catalyst

Doctors for America

Families USA

Human Rights Watch

Little Lobbyists

Lower Drug Prices Now

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Patients for Affordable Drugs Now

PrEP4All

Protect Our Care

UNIDOS US Action Fund

West Health Institute