



PATIENTS FOR AFFORDABLE DRUGS NOW™

January 4, 2022

Dear Senator:

As negotiations around the reconciliation package continue, we want to again emphasize the historic opportunity to enact crucial provisions to lower prescription drug prices and out-of-pocket costs for millions of older Americans and their families. The need is staggering – Americans have paid far too much for their medications for far too long. As adjustments to the package are considered in the coming weeks, the promise of lower prescription drug prices remains a cornerstone priority for voters of all ages, and the Senate must seize the opportunity to enact the previously negotiated provisions on drug pricing.

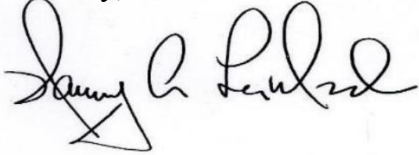
For anyone concerned about inflation, lowering drug prices should be the first item on the agenda. For years, prescription drug prices have [risen at rates](#) that dwarf even the highest rates of general inflation. If consumer prices had risen as fast as drug prices over the last 15 years, gas would now cost \$12.20 a gallon and milk would be \$13 a gallon.

That is why this issue is so critical for American seniors, who take on average four or five drugs a month and have a median income of less than \$30,000. As prices rise, more and more seniors and patients are forced to make difficult choices between filling their prescriptions or paying rent and buying groceries. An annual cap on out-of-pocket expenses for people on Medicare Part D and a cap on insulin copays for the millions of Americans with diabetes offer not just savings, but life-saving relief. While inflation is on the minds of American families and hitting their pocketbooks, lowering the prices of prescription drugs is a clear path to offering real help. We have heard suggestions that prescription drug price reform could be achieved at a later date given the overwhelming popularity of the issue across the country. But broad public support for Medicare negotiation and lower drug prices has been an enduring feature of the American political landscape for years, and yet nothing has ever changed. Seniors and patients have waited decades for Congress to finally enact desperately needed relief. They cannot wait any longer, and suggesting that Congress should delay action to some hypothetical future date is a non-starter for our organizations.

Lowering prescription drug prices stands to also save taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the drug pricing provisions in Build Back Better would save [\\$297 billion](#) over 10 years – including \$84 billion from rebates paid for excessive price hikes and \$79 billion from finally allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices. After years of paying top dollar for prescription drugs, American families and taxpayers cannot afford to leave that kind of money on the table.

Let us be clear: now is the time. Patients and seniors cannot wait any longer and are demanding immediate action. Voter surveys consistently rate this issue as one of the most popular and most important priorities in the Build Back Better Act. Americans of all ages — regardless of political party — are counting on you to finally make good on the promise of lower drug prices and deliver the landmark reforms already negotiated with both houses of Congress.

Sincerely,



Nancy A. LeMond
Executive Vice President and
Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer
AARP



David Mitchell
President and Founder
Patients For Affordable Drugs Now