

October 20, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

We write to you on behalf of the millions of Americans who want real relief from outrageous prescription drug prices and are urging Congress to protect them from higher costs. Costly legislation like S.832/H.R. 1492 – the *Ensuring Pathways to Innovative Cures (EPIC) Act* – does not serve the American taxpayers and would instead block or delay patients’ access to lower prescription drug prices at a time when the [overwhelming majority](#) support granting Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices for more drugs.

Simply put, the EPIC Act would give drug companies even more time to charge Americans the same or even higher prices for their medications – all by extending the Medicare drug price negotiation exemption period for small molecule drugs (pills) from nine to 13 years. That’s four more years where patients and taxpayers would continue bearing the burden of high prices, with billions in additional costs. In real terms, taxpayers could face close to 10 billion dollars in unnecessary spending at a time when fiscal responsibility is paramount, while patients face impossible choices like whether to fill their prescriptions or purchase groceries.

The pharmaceutical industry’s claim that current law is stifling the development of small-molecule drugs is not supported by objective evidence. Since Medicare drug price negotiation became law in 2022:

- **Investment and innovation have increased.** In the nine months following the passage of the law, big drug companies [acquired more small-molecule drugs](#) than in the nine months prior.
- **Research and development (R&D) investment remains robust.** A [recently published analysis](#) showed an increase in drug licensing as well as pharmaceutical investment in research and development during the six quarters following the passage of the law. Available data does not support claims that drug development has slowed since enactment.

Moreover, only the highest expenditure drugs can be selected for negotiation. To be eligible, products must gross at least \$200 million per year from Medicare alone. Coupled with the number of years before Medicare-negotiated drug prices become available, drugs that are eligible

for negotiation are well-positioned to recover all of their R&D costs within the existing nine-year window based solely on Medicare revenue. It is also important to note that the pharmaceutical industry does not undertake R&D alone. Taxpayers help underwrite medical innovation: the NIH contributed funding to over 99 percent of drugs approved between 2010 and 2019.

Americans deserve a government that prioritizes their needs over unfounded complaints from drug companies. We urge you to stand with patients and older Americans by protecting access to affordable medicines and ensuring taxpayer dollars are used wisely. Please oppose any legislation that would make it harder for struggling patients to gain affordable access to the medications they need, including the EPIC Act (S.832/H.R.1492).

Sincerely,

AARP

Patients for Affordable Drugs Now