August 5, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
Chairman, Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Chairman, Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Chairman Sanders, and Chairman Wyden:

We write to urge you to make sure that the upcoming reconciliation bill includes reforms to lower the cost of prescription drugs for all Americans as well as provisions that give Medicare the authority to negotiate the best drug prices.

Too many Americans are struggling to afford the medications they need. Last year, one in three Americans saw their out-of-pocket medication costs increase, and certain brand-name prescription drugs in the United States cost two to four times more than they do in other countries. This has real consequences. We have heard too many stories of people cutting pills in half, skipping doses, or declining to fill their prescriptions altogether as a result of high prices. In fact, nearly 20 percent of older adults report not taking their medicines as prescribed because of the cost.

To help bring down the cost of prescription drugs, we must allow Medicare to directly negotiate with pharmaceutical companies. Currently, 46 million seniors are enrolled in the Medicare Part D program, and while the program has helped tens of millions of people access life-saving drugs, more must be done to address the high out-of-pocket costs too many Medicare beneficiaries are facing.

We have solutions on the table to help people access the medications they need at the prices they can afford. By allowing Medicare negotiation, we can help cut the cost of prescription drugs while increasing access to life-saving medications. And this idea has broad support. According to

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1. Nguyen, Amanda (March 22, 2021). Survey: Americans Struggle to Afford Medications as COVID-19 Hits Savings and Insurance Coverage. GoodRx. [https://www.goodrx.com/blog/survey-covid-19-effects-on-medication-affordability/#--::text=According%20to%20a%20new%20GoodRx%20survey%20and%20shelter%20as%20a%20result%20of%20COVID-19%2C%20many%20Americans%20are%20struggling%20to%20afford%20medications%2C%20and%20the%20cost%20of%20these%20medications%20is%20increasing%2C%20and%20many%20people%20report%20not%20being%20able%20to%20afford%20the%20medications%20they%20need%20due%20to%20the%20COVID-19%20pandemic.](https://www.goodrx.com/blog/survey-covid-19-effects-on-medication-affordability/#--::text=According%20to%20a%20new%20GoodRx%20and%20shelter%20as%20a%20result%20of%20COVID-19%2C%20many%20Americans%20are%20struggling%20to%20afford%20medications%2C%20and%20the%20cost%20of%20these%20medications%20is%20increasing%2C%20and%20many%20people%20report%20not%20being%20able%20to%20afford%20the%20medications%20they%20need%20due%20to%20the%20COVID-19%20pandemic.)

a recent poll, nearly 90 percent of Americans support allowing the federal government to negotiate for lower drug prices.\(^3\)

We strongly urge inclusion of provisions to empower Medicare to negotiate drug prices and increase the affordability of prescription drugs in the upcoming reconciliation bill.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Mark Kelly
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator
