

What's At Stake for the American People as Drug Costs Skyrocket

House Democrats Work to Lower Drug Costs For The People with H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act

This week, House Democrats will begin to move H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, through the House, with hearings held by subcommittees of the Energy & Commerce and Education & Labor Committees. In doing so, the Democratic-led majority is taking another important step toward lowering prescription drug prices for all Americans. With costs skyrocketing, the American people expect action on this top priority. Here's a reminder of what's at stake:

TOO MANY AMERICANS WORRY THEY CAN'T AFFORD THEIR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Recent [polling by the Kaiser Family Foundation](#) shows that Americans worry about their ability to afford their prescription drugs:

- One in four Americans says the price of prescription drugs makes it difficult to afford their medications.
- Three in 10 adults do not take their medication as prescribed because of the costs.
- Seventy-nine percent of Americans find that the cost of prescription drugs is “unreasonable.”
- Only 43 percent of Americans believe that drug companies price their products fairly.

DRUG COSTS ARE SKYROCKETING AND AMERICANS ARE PAYING MORE

According to a [Ways and Means analysis](#) of U.S. drug prices compared to eleven other similar countries:

- Prescription drug prices in the U.S. are significantly higher than in all eleven countries. They are nearly four times higher on average and can be over ten times higher in some instances.
- Pharmaceutical companies admit they still make profits abroad even while selling prescription drugs at much lower prices.
- The monthly average per capita spending on prescription drugs in the U.S. is nearly double the next closest country.
- The U.S. could save \$49 billion annually on Medicare Part D alone by using average drug prices from these other countries on just the 79 drugs studied.

In addition, an analysis released by the nonprofit Health Care Cost Institute earlier this year found “the cost of insulin for treating type 1 diabetes in the United States nearly doubled over a five-year period.” [Reuters, [1/22/19](#)]

H.R. 3, THE LOWER DRUG COSTS NOW ACT

In order to address this unsustainable status quo, House Democrats have introduced H.R. 3, The Lower Drug Costs Now Act, to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans. This legislation will:

- End the ban on Medicare negotiating directly with drug companies, and force drug companies to the table to agree to real price reductions in line with the prices charged in other countries for those drugs.
- Make the lower drug prices negotiated by Medicare available to all Americans, including those with private insurance.
- Strengthen Medicare and create a new, \$2,000 out-of-pocket limit on prescription drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries.
- Reinvest in innovation and the search for new cures and treatments.

Office of Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, 9/26/19