



SB 844: Creating an Oregon Prescription Drug Affordability Board

Reining in out-of-control drug prices for Oregon consumers

Prescription medications are vital to Oregonians' health, safety, and quality of life. But drugs only work if people can afford them.

As the cost of prescription medications continues to skyrocket, seniors, families, employers, and state and local governments literally pay the price. Every day, Oregonians are forced to make difficult decisions in order to access life-saving medications, resorting to rationing their drugs or forgoing essential needs like groceries, rent, and paying bills.

Pharmaceutical companies use the lack of regulation to their advantage, forcing those who need the prescriptions to live with dignity and survive to accept unaffordable price increases. **Our federal government has failed to set regulations to keep the pharmaceutical industry in check – but rising drug prices do not have to be as inevitable.**

SB 844 will create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board, Oregon can limit Pharma's drug pricing practices, curbing skyrocketing costs on life-saving medications and driving down costs for the Oregonians who depend on them.

» Identifying prescription drug products that create affordability challenges

The pharmaceutical industry plays an aggressive game of "Not Us" when it comes to drug pricing, but the truth is they spend more on advertising than on the research and development critical to developing new drugs. The Oregon Prescription Drug Affordability Board will closely look at critical life-saving medications that have skyrocketed in price and identify those that have excessively increased without reasonable cause.

» Setting an upper payment limit for excessively priced drugs

Prescription drug prices are a matter of life and death, and their use is only as valuable as people's ability to afford access to them. The Oregon Prescription Drug Affordability Board will align with other states that are limiting how much will be paid for certain medications, ultimately driving down costs for seniors and families. The state already reviews health insurance rate increases, which has saved Oregon consumers hundreds of millions of dollars in unjustified premium increases over the last decade. It's time for drug prices to get the same level of scrutiny.

» Penalize emergency price gouging

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the unconscionable practice of price gouging during emergencies. The Oregon Prescription Drug Accountability Board will establish penalties for drug companies that take advantage of emergencies for profit, ensuring critical medications won't be out of reach due to cost when they are needed most.

Learn more about OCAP and our mission at AffordableRxNow.org

For more information contact Dave Hunt (dave@columbiapublicaffairs.com or 503-810-8387) or Taylor Sarman (taylor@columbiapublicaffairs.com or 541-910-5711)



Oregonians are calling on lawmakers to take action on lower drug prices.



"In December 2017 I noticed a few small changes in my Dad, a persistent cough and sudden fatigue he just couldn't shake. A diagnosis of advanced late stage lung cancer soon followed. Our family was devastated. The FDA approved a brand new oral chemo that had successfully treated similar patients in trials. **But hope came with a price tag.**

"**A 30-day supply of this once daily medication is currently \$11,000 per month.** In 2018, when he began taking this medication, it was "only" \$4,000 a month. **The price has increased 175% in three years -- not due to any formulary or dosage changes. It is simply because they can.**

"I have two young children and I desperately want my children to grow up with their Nana & Papa for as long as possible. **Drug manufacturers know people will pay anything to keep their loved ones alive. They count on it, and they are preying on families like mine.** What wouldn't we pay for an incredibly effective medicine that has given us more years with my dad? No matter the price, we will find a way. Drug manufacturers know this, and they will keep going until they take every last penny we have."

-- Joan Morgan, Happy Valley

Trusted organizations across Oregon have come together to support a Prescription Drug Affordability Board:



Read patient stories and learn more at AffordableRxNow.org