



Take Action: ADVOCACY GUIDE

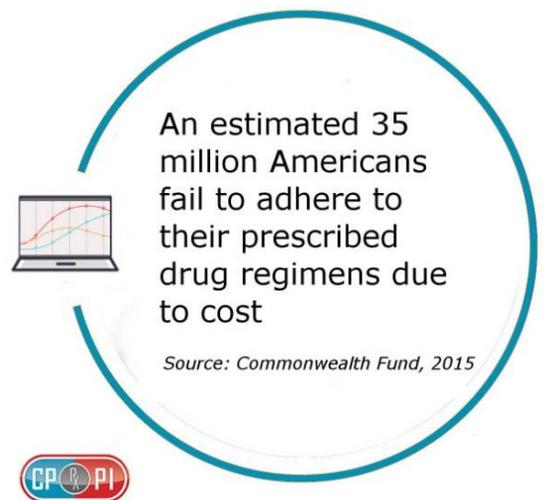
Access to safe and affordable prescription medications is a high priority for members of Congress right now. Each day, they are confronted with the opportunity to take a position on an issue or a bill that affects millions of people across the country. Their decisions will have a long-lasting impact on the health and well-being of Americans.

This is why it is critical that they hear from people like you about your experience accessing safe medications at an affordable price. We encourage you to share your opinions and concerns with elected officials to make sure that their decisions reflect what is in the best interest of their constituents.

Your continued involvement can help guide and inform our efforts to ensure Congress understands the challenges Americans face every day in accessing safe and affordable daily prescription medications.

A few key ways you can take action:

1. Sign up to receive CPPI communications [HERE](#)
2. Share your story to help inform decision makers on the real impact of high drug prices [HERE](#)
3. Join our Action Committee and get more involved by emailing us at info@personalimportation.org
4. Let Congress know how this issue impacts you [HERE](#)
5. Follow us on [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#) so you can see the latest news on this important issue



Advocacy Tips

We have developed the suggestions below to help you stand up and be heard:

- **Identify your elected champions.** You can search for your elected official by visiting [this link](#).
- **Educate yourself on how to connect with your elected officials.** Since they are bombarded with information on a daily basis, it is important to consider the best approach for getting through to them and leaving a lasting impression.
- **Arm yourself with information.** Research facts and data that can help strengthen your messages. Please feel free to include these points in emails, letters and messages that you relay to your elected officials. (see background below)
- **Be clear and succinct.** It is important to be brief and clear in your communications to your elected officials. Below, we share examples of emails and letters that can serve as a starting point for you to model.
- **Use your own story to illustrate the impact.** Elected officials need to hear real stories from people like you who face day-to-day struggles affording medication. Below, we share a template that you can use, in addition to questions that you can address that will help to communicate your story clearly and effectively.
- **Consider reaching out to reporters who frequently cover this issue.** If you are open to sharing your story broadly and would like to engage with media, please email info@personalimportation.org and we would be happy to give you one-on-one training and guidance in how to effectively engage reporters or Members of Congress. Examples of ways to engage with media include sharing your story with reporters who are working on articles, submitting an op-ed to a media outlet to share your perspective, or commenting on media stories online.
- **Tell others.** Share your story and passion for this issue with friends and relatives and ask them to get engaged by sharing information with them. (See suggestions below)

In-Person Visit

Visiting your Congressional representative can be a good way of helping to make the issue more real by sharing your personal story or connection to the issue and educating them on the importance of providing safe and affordable access to prescription medication. A few points to keep in mind:

Pre-meeting -

- Identify your elected official and research their position on the issue by visiting their website. Please visit this [link](#) to search for contact information for your elected official.
- Reach out to your elected official to set up a meeting, giving them some information on what you would like to discuss specifically
- Research the issue to ensure you are well-versed and can answer questions, and identify specific points and messages that you want to highlight (See background below to help understand the issue)
- Prepare highlights of your personal story to show the impact of high drug prices and importance of personal prescription importation
- Confirm the appointment – time, date, location – within 24 hours of the scheduled meeting time
- Ensure you are registered to vote and if you voted for the elected official that you are meeting with, let them know

Meeting -

- Bring one-page summaries of relevant data and statistics that can help to inform the discussion
- Provide an overview of the meeting by sharing what you would like to discuss during your meeting, be brief and to the point – the meeting should last no more than 15 minutes
- Share your perspective on the impact of the consequences that high drug prices have on Americans who cannot afford them
- Identify a request or ask that you can make during the meeting, such as supporting a particular piece of legislation or working with other like-minded decision makers on drafting legislation
- Encourage discussion and questions throughout the meeting
- Thank them for their time and consideration

Post-meeting –

- Follow up with a personal note thanking them for their time and attention

Sample Outreach Message

Dear [Rep./Senator Name]

I am reaching out to you to request a meeting to discuss an issue very important to me – ensuring access to safe and affordable prescription medications.

Personally, I have been affected by this issue. [NOTE: Insert brief details on your personal story and perspective]

Outrageously high prices for many brand name prescription drugs has created a serious health crisis in the U.S. and is a significant financial burden for many Americans.

Many people are forced to skip doses, split pills, or forgo medications completely, which compromises their health. The high cost of daily prescription drugs often forces individuals to choose between their medications and gas, food, or even their mortgage. This is unacceptable – no one should ever be faced with this decision in this country – and could lead to serious health consequences for patients and increased costs for the healthcare system and taxpayers.

Importing prescription medications from safe, verified pharmacies in Canada provides a lifeline to those in need of affordable life-saving and health maintenance medications.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you in person, at your convenience. I will contact your office directly to discuss scheduling.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

[Name]

[City, State]

[Phone]

Sample Thank You Note

Dear [Rep./Senator Name]

Thank you for your time and attention [yesterday/last week/on xx day].

As I shared with you, the issue of ensuring safe and affordable access to prescription medications is important to me and many people in my community.

[If there was a specific request in the meeting, such as support for a bill, please feel free to restate here.]

I greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet with you in person, thank you again.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[City, State]

[Phone]

Spreading the Word

We encourage you to share messages on the importance of ensuring access to safe and affordable prescription medication through your personal social media network, direct emails to friends and family and talking to people who you think might be interested in the issue.

Below are sample messages and content that you can use to spread the word.

Twitter

Hashtags: #BigPharma, #pharma, #pharmaceuticals #RxImportation, #RxPrices, #RxPricing

[Note: #BigPharma and #pharmaceuticals and #pharma yield higher reach]

Congressional leaders who support importation to thank and applaud publicly:

@SenJohnMcCain @SenSanders @amyklobuchar @ChuckGrassley

@SenSherrodBrown @SenAngusKing @SenatorLeahy @SenWhitehouse

Sample Tweets

Please feel free to use these messages in your own social networks:

Americans face ever increasing high #RxPrices in the U.S., help fight for drug importation <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Americans have a right to safe Rx drugs at affordable prices, support drug importation <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

The reality -> Millions of Americans buy Rx medications from licensed Canadian pharmacies each year <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Drug importation from Canada saves millions of dollars and prevents serious health outcomes each year
<http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

High #RxPrices created a serious health crisis & is a burden for the elderly & others on fixed incomes <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Millions of people skip doses, split pills, or forgo medications completely because of high #RxPricing <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

High #RxPricing can force people to choose between their medications & gas, food, or their mortgage <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Credentialed online pharmacies in Canada are safe, providing compliant, safe medications for verified Rx <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Millions of Americans have been importing drugs from licensed Canadian pharmacies for more than 15 years <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

The reality: FDA and its Canadian counterpart, Health Canada, have equivalent Rx standards <http://bit.ly/2mVaZLg>

Facebook Sample Posts

- As lawmakers struggle to address the issue of high drug prices, facing intense resistance from the pharmaceutical manufacturers, allowing personal prescription importation from Canada is the simplest, most immediate solution to provide Americans with reasonable access to safe, affordable prescription medications.
- Congress should act to ensure full access to safe, affordable daily prescription medications from legitimate, licensed Canadian pharmacies. Bipartisan legislation has been introduced time-and-again for more than a decade to address this issue with a common-sense approach. The time to act is now!

Sample Email Message

Dear [name]

I wanted to reach out to share more information on an issue that I care about deeply – ensuring access to safe and affordable prescription medications.

Personally, I have been affected by this issue. [NOTE: Insert brief details on personal story and perspective]

Outrageously high prices for many brand name prescription drugs has created a serious health crisis in the U.S. and is a significant financial burden for many Americans.

Many people are forced to skip doses, split pills, or forgo medications completely, which compromises their health. The high cost of daily prescription drugs often forces individuals to choose between their medications and gas, food, or even their mortgage. This is unacceptable – no one should ever be faced with this decision in this country – and could lead to serious health consequences for patients and increased costs for the healthcare system and taxpayers.

Sample email (continued)

Importing prescription medications from safe, verified pharmacies in Canada provides a lifeline to those in need of affordable life-saving and health maintenance medications.

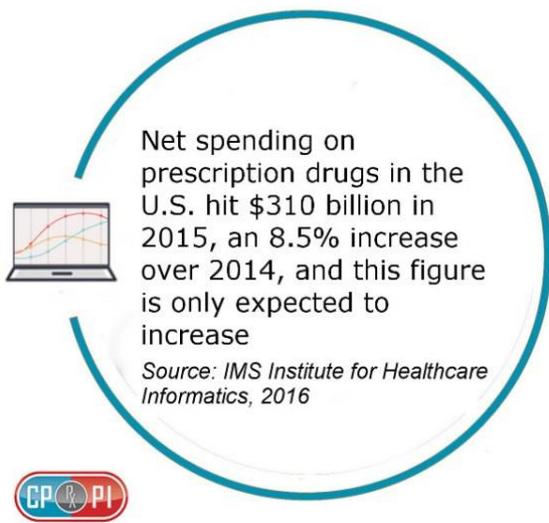
I encourage you to learn more about this issue by visiting this link:

<https://personalimportation.org/understand-the-issue/>

If you have any questions, or would like to take action on this issue, please let me know.

Thank you,
[Name]

[Continues on next page]



Understand the Issue: Background

For decades, Americans with access to Canada travelled to brick-and-mortar Canadian pharmacies to fill their prescriptions. In fact, elected officials would often take buses of constituents across the border to do so, [including Congressman Bernie Sanders of Vermont](#) (now Senator Sanders), Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, and many others.

The Internet has expanded access to many of these same pharmacies for Americans who don't live close to the U.S.-Canadian border. Personal prescription importation from certified, trusted, and legitimate Canadian pharmacies has been used by millions of Americans for more than 15 years as a safe and affordable alternative to the exorbitant prescription drug prices in the U.S.

The Impact of High Prescription Drug Prices: Impact on Consumers

The high price of brand name drugs in the U.S. has created a serious health crisis and is a significant burden for the elderly and others on fixed incomes.

Millions of people, often the elderly with chronic health conditions, are either skipping doses, splitting pills, or forgoing medications completely. The high cost of daily prescription drugs often forces individuals to choose between their medications and gas, food, or even their mortgage. Patients who need medications to treat conditions from asthma to high cholesterol to arthritis pain are at the mercy of drug makers who can charge "whatever the market will bear."

Importing prescription medications from safe, verified pharmacies in Canada provides a lifeline to those in need of affordable life-saving and health maintenance medications.

Americans facing ever-increasing medication costs often choose not to adhere to their prescription regimens. This is an unacceptable choice resulting in serious health consequences for patients and leading to increased costs for the healthcare system and taxpayers.

Impact on Caregivers

Caregivers – who are often family members – also face hard health care decisions, as they are responsible for the financial and physical administration of health care, including maintenance drugs.

In some cases, we know caregivers will pay out of their own pockets for prescriptions to ensure that their loved one can take their high-priced daily prescription medication, often placing a financial strain on other family members as well as the patient.

Impact on the Healthcare System

This is a burden to the U.S. healthcare system due to primary and secondary health issues created by non-adherence.

Many individuals who import their medications from licensed Canadian pharmacies are on Medicare and/or Medicaid. When these individuals cannot afford their health maintenance drugs, the resulting non-adherence snowballs into health complications that can easily result in otherwise avoidable hospitalizations. In turn, government healthcare programs – and thus American taxpayers – pick up the tab.

The exorbitantly high cost of prescription medications is an ongoing, serious health crisis for millions of Americans, they are desperate for relief and want the government to act.

The Solution

As lawmakers struggle to address the issue of high drug prices, facing intense resistance from the pharmaceutical manufacturers, allowing personal prescription importation from Canada is the simplest, most immediate solution to provide Americans with reasonable access to safe, affordable prescription medications.

While we are pleased to see Congress and others putting forth options to address absurdly high drug prices, most proposals will take years to implement, if they move forward at all. On the other hand, Congress can provide relief *today* by allowing importation of personal-use medications from credentialed, verified Canadian pharmacies.