The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  

October 20, 2021  

Dear Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi,  

We write to you with growing concern over reporting that congressional leadership is considering excluding or significantly weakening drug price negotiation policy in the Build Back Better Act, due to pressure from members of Congress out of step with the needs and demands of the American people.1

Drug price negotiation has repeatedly polled as one of, and often the most popular single policy in the entire Build Back Better Act and Biden agenda.2 That extraordinary support holds even after voters are presented with talking points from prescription drug corporations opposing price negotiations, including 95% of Democrats and more than 8-in-10 adults generally.3

We recognize that Medicare drug price negotiation has been a longstanding priority for you both, Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi.4 Yet certain isolated members of Congress would rather leave your promises unfulfilled, prioritizing drug corporations’ ongoing ability to price gouge and charge United States consumers 3-4 times prices paid in other wealthy countries for prescription drugs over staying true to commitments and helping patients who are struggling to afford medicines. Some have proposed changes that would render drug price negotiations virtually meaningless, by excluding patented drugs from negotiations and removing the excise tax penalty to enforce drug corporation engagement in negotiations.

Patented, brand-name drugs account for most of the spending on prescription drugs in Medicare and in the United States overall.5 6 Excluding such drugs from negotiations would purposely ignore the medicines for which drug corporation price gouging is most severe, and patients most deeply harmed by price gouging. Without an aggressive enforcement mechanism to compel drug corporations to engage in direct government price negotiations, in effect the policy would no longer be “negotiation” – it would instead become a highly structured process for the United States government to beg.

---

4 https://www.speaker.gov/newsroom/51018-4
6 https://accessiblemeds.org/resources/reports/2021-savings-report
We stand with you to fulfill your longstanding promises to pass drug price negotiation and bold drug pricing reform, and to finally deliver on years of promises to enact one of the most common sense and popular measures ever demanded of Congress.

Sincerely,

National & International
AIDS Healthcare Foundation
American Federation of Teachers
American Medical Student Association
Be a Hero
CASA in Action
Center for Popular Democracy
Communications Workers of America
Community Catalyst
Consumer Action
Doctors For America
Equal Rights Advocates
Global Justice Institute of Metropolitan Community Churches
Health Care Voices
Indivisible
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
Just Care USA
Main Street Alliance
MomsRising
MoveOn
National Nurses United
National Organization for Women
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Our Revolution
Partners for Dignity & Rights
People's Action
PrEP4All
Prescription Justice
Progressive Democrats of America
Protect Our Care
Public Citizen
R2H Action [Right to Health]
Rights & Democracy
Social Security Works
T1International
Voices for Progress

State & Local
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Every Texan
Health Care For All Massachusetts
Health Care for All Oregon
Health Care Is a Human Right WA
Health Care Justice--NC
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
Jane Addams Senior Caucus
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
Maine People's Alliance
Metro New York Health Care for All
Our Revolution Alexandria
Our Revolution Northern Virginia
Our Revolution Virginia
Portland Jobs with Justice
Progressive Democrats of America - Arizona
Progressive Democrats of America - Virginia
Progressive Maryland
PSARA (Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action)
TakeAction Minnesota
Tennessee Health Care Campaign
Tennessee Justice Center
United Vision for Idaho
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
Virginia Organizing
Washington Community Action Network