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**The NRLN advocates the rights of more than 2 million American retirees from...**

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July 29, 2014

Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Madam Secretary:

The public comment period on the promulgation of regulations for Section 708 of the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (FDASIA) has closed. Regardless of the regulations being developed, I am appealing to you on behalf of the more than 2 million retirees and future retirees represented by the National Retiree Legislative Network (NRLN) to exercise your oversight of the FDA to prevent the agency from seizing and destroying prescription drugs purchased from other countries.

It is the NRLN's contention that the FDA should be directing its resources to set prescription drug safety standards that drug manufactures in foreign countries must meet in order for those medicines to be imported into the United States rather than confiscating and destroying drugs at our borders. Numerous times over the past seven (7) years, leaders of the FDA have testified before Congressional committee hearings and to the media about not having people or facilities to support prescription drug importation yet they have never provided a plan to do so. HHS should seek an importation support plan from the FDA instead of promulgating rules that make FDA part of our border patrol operations.

Bills such as Senate, **S. 2549, the Safe and Affordable Drugs from Canada Act** and **H.R. 3715, the Personal Drug Importation Fairness Act** pending in the House Subcommittee on Health and the loud voices of retirees and physicians who are sick of Pharma rhetoric and FDA apathy should be HHS wakeup calls. Prescription drug safety is an accomplishable goal and savings are irrefutable.

The NRLN estimates in its whitepaper posted at [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) that importation of prescription drugs would save U.S. consumers 5% of the \$4.7 trillion in total U.S. drug expenditures over the next ten years, a savings of \$235 billion. Medicare savings would be 5% of the \$978.9 billion purchased by Medicare or \$48.9 billion over the same period. To discuss the NRLN's prescription drug cost-saving proposals, contact **Marta Bascom**, NRLN Executive Director at [executivedirector@nrln.org](mailto:executivedirector@nrln.org) or call 703-863-9611.

(More)

Research by the Kaiser Family Foundation shows that American pharmaceutical companies reap 3 to 4 times the profit earned by all Fortune 500 companies. Americans, particularly retirees living on fixed incomes, should not have to pay artificially high prices for prescription drugs. U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturers are essentially exempt from safe global importation and re-importation competition that would lower prices.

The NRLN urges you to influence the FDA to avoid the cost of “policing” prescription drugs purchased by Americans who cannot afford the exorbitantly priced medicines in the USA. HHS and the FDA should produce a plan supporting importation, not be accomplices of the American pharmaceutical industry with its powerful Washington, D.C. lobbying and political contributions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Kadereit". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill Kadereit, President  
National Retiree Legislative Network  
Phone: 972-722-5928  
Email: [president@nrln.org](mailto:president@nrln.org)