

March 14, 2011

To: NRLN Grassroots Network Members  
From: NRLN President Bill Kadereit  
Subject: NRLN Action Alert: Time to Pass Prescription Drug Bills

**DO YOU TAKE BRAND NAME DRUGS?** If so, read on.

- 1) Would you like to have a cheaper generic drug that is safe and just as effective?
- 2) Would you like to see Medicare empowered to negotiate lower prescription drugs prices for you?
- 3) Would you like to have access to safe, lower cost medicines from FDA-approved countries?

**If your answer is "Yes"** to one or more of these questions, then you need to email the NRLN's sample letter to your U.S. Senators to urge their support for passage of three bills pending in the Senate. Also, email a letter your U.S. Representative to request that he or she introduce companion bills in the U.S. House.

The NRLN has been advocating the need for legislation to address the high and ever-increasing cost of prescription drugs. Passage of the three bills by Congress and signed by the President would address practically all of what we have been advocating.

**S. 27, Preserve Access to Affordable Generics Act** would (1) enhance competition in the pharmaceutical market by stopping anticompetitive agreements between brand name and generic drug manufacturers; and (2) support the purpose and intent of antitrust laws by prohibiting anticompetitive practices in the pharmaceutical industry that harm consumers.

S.27 was introduced by Senators Herb Kohl (WI) and Charles Grassley (IA). Co-sponsors include: Senators Sherrod Brown (OH), Susan Collins (ME), Richard Durbin (IL), Al Franken (MN), Tim Johnson (SD), Amy Klobuchar (MN) and Bernard Sanders (VT).

**S. 44, Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2011** would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers the prices that may be charged to Medicare Part D prescription drug plan (PDP) sponsors and Medicare Advantage (MA) organizations for covered Part D drugs for Part D eligible individuals who are enrolled under a PDP or under an MA-prescription drug plan.

S. 44 was introduced by Senator Amy Klobuchar. Co-sponsors include: Senators Mark Begich (AK), Richard Blumenthal (CT), Daniel Inouye (HI) and Bernard Sanders.

**S. 319: Pharmaceutical Market Access and Drug Safety Act of 2011** would allow U.S.-licensed pharmacies and drug wholesalers to import FDA-approved medications from countries with tough safety standards, such as Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, and pass along the savings to American customers. This approach will allow Americans access to more affordable drugs from these countries, which are 35 to 55 percent lower than in the U.S. The legislation would also allow individual consumers to purchase prescription drugs for their own personal use from safe, reliable, FDA-inspected Canadian pharmacies.

S. 319 was introduced by Senators Olympia Snowe (ME) and Debbie Stabenow (MI). Co-sponsors include: Senators Mark Begich (AK), Jeff Bingaman (NM), Sherrod Brown (OH), Susan Collins (ME), Charles Grassley (IA), Tim Johnson (SD), John Kerry (MA), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Herb Kohl (WI), Patrick Leahy (VT), Carl Levin (MI), John McCain (AZ), Claire McCaskill (MO), Bill Nelson (FL), Bernard Sanders (VT), Jeanne Shaheen (NH) and David Vitter (LA).

- Go to <http://capwiz.com/abtr/home/> to access the NRLN Action Alert. Look for the Action Alert headline: TIME TO PASS PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILLS. Then click on the "Take Action" button. On the next screen, type in your zip code and click "GO" to identify your elected representatives and access the

sample letter. There will be one message for your U.S. Senators and a different message for your U.S. Representative.

- If one or both of your Senators is a sponsor of one or more of the above bills, I encourage you to edit the sample letter to thank them for their support and ask them to work to get more of their colleagues to become co-sponsors of the bills.
- If you have a problem accessing the Action Alert with the above link, go to [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org) and click on the link in the action alert.
- Call the Washington, DC offices of your members of Congress via the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121. Give the name of the Representative or Senator you want contact.
- Use the information in the sample letters (copies below) to urge your lawmaker to support legislation to reduce the cost of prescription drugs.

In addition to your support on this Action Alert, we need you to encourage your friends to sign up as Grassroots Network members at <http://capwiz.com/abtr/mlm/signup/>. Not only do we need you and your friends to email letters to Washington and talk with your members of Congress, we also need your financial support through an individual member contribution of \$25, \$50, \$75 or more. Any amount you can contribute will be appreciated. You may make your check or money order payable to **NRLN, Inc.** and mail it along with the Membership Contribution Form at: <http://www.nrln.org/printad.htm>. Or, you may make your contribution online with your credit card on the NRLN website at <http://www.nrln.org> by clicking on the "Memberships" icon at the top of the home page and selecting the "Support the NRLN" link.

Bill Kadereit, President, National Retiree Legislative Network  
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Sample Letter to U.S. Senators

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_:

Your constituents—especially retirees living on fixed incomes—need relief from the high and ever-increasing cost of prescription drugs. If you are not already a co-sponsor of the following bi-partisan bills, I urge you to become a co-sponsor and support getting them out of committee and vote for their passage in the Senate. The bills are:

**S. 27, Preserve Access to Affordable Generics Act** would (1) enhance competition in the pharmaceutical market by stopping anticompetitive agreements between brand name and generic drug manufacturers; and (2) support the purpose and intent of antitrust laws by prohibiting anticompetitive practices in the pharmaceutical industry that harm consumers.

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**S. 319: Pharmaceutical Market Access and Drug Safety Act of 2011** would allow U.S.-licensed pharmacies and drug wholesalers to import FDA-approved medications from countries with tough safety standards, such as Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, and pass along the savings to American customers. This approach will allow Americans access to more affordable drugs from these countries, which are 35 to 55 percent lower than in the U.S. The legislation would also allow individual consumers to purchase prescription drugs for their own personal use from safe, reliable, FDA-inspected Canadian pharmacies.

I am a member of the National Retiree Legislative Network that represents the interests of more than 2 million retirees who live in all 50 states and have retired from 125 different companies and public entities. I look forward to hearing from you that you will work for the enactment of these bills that will address the outrageous fact that the cost of prescription drugs increased 93% between 2004 and 2010, and 11% between 2009 and 2010.

Sincerely,

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Sample Letter to U.S. Representatives:

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_:

Your constituents—especially retirees living on fixed incomes—need relief from the high and ever-increasing cost of prescription drugs. There are three bi-partisan bills in the U.S. Senate that would help lower the cost of prescription drugs. I urge you to introduce companion bills in the U.S. House for the following:

**S. 27, Preserve Access to Affordable Generics Act** would (1) enhance competition in the pharmaceutical market by stopping anticompetitive agreements between brand name and generic drug manufacturers; and (2) support the purpose and intent of antitrust laws by prohibiting anticompetitive practices in the pharmaceutical industry that harm consumers.

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