

NRLN Email Obama Medicare Drugs

To: NRLN Grassroots Network Members

From: NRLN President Bill Kadereit

Subject: NRLN Applauds President Obama's Desire For Cheaper Prescription Drugs

Apparently our new President "gets" what the NRLN has been advocating since its founding. According to the White House website at www.whitehouse.gov, President Obama also supports allowing seniors to import safe prescription drugs from overseas, and will prevent pharmaceutical companies from blocking cheap and safe generic drugs from the market. Also, President Obama supports allowing the federal government to negotiate for lower drug prices for the Medicare program, just as it does to lower prices for veterans.

Since January 28, 2002, when the first NRLN Board of Directors was elected, the NRLN has spoken out for the need to make prescription drugs more affordable. One of the NRLN's first Action Alerts asked NRLN Grassroots Network members to right to their U.S. Representatives to urge support for the Senate-passed Greater Access To Affordable Pharmaceuticals Act of 2002.

The NRLN aggressively work on Capital Hill to promote the passage of S. 2328 the Pharmaceutical Market Access and Drug Safety Act of 2004 introduced by Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND). Although the bill did not pass, it had the right objective to allow for the importation of prescription drugs.

The bill continued to be introduce in subsequent sessions of Congress. On June 22, 2007, NRLN's Past President, Jim Norby, sent letters to thank the U.S. House members who were sponsoring H.R. 380 the Pharmaceutical Market Access and Drug Safety Act of 2007. Jim pointed out in his letter that *"Americans deserve to have the benefit of global competition in the pharmaceutical industry. Furthermore, your proposed legislation would provide a structure for the FDA to ensure a high level of safety for prescription drug imports."*

To this day a major objective in the NRLN's Legislative Agenda is to gain passage of legislation for the importation of safe and lower-cost prescription drugs. We also continue to seek passage of a bill to force the negotiation of prices for Medicare prescription drugs.

I can't say what the genesis was for President Obama's position to support the importation of safe prescription drugs and for the federal government to negotiate for lower drug prices for the Medicare participants. I can say that in the NRLN's proposal made last May to the Democratic National Platform Committee there was this statement: **"No American should be forced to choose between meals and medications. We support competitive bidding of prescription drugs, faster approval of generic drugs, and the safe importation of lower-cost drugs from other countries subject to approval by the FDA. "**

The NRLN will be supporting President Obama's desire for cheaper prescription drugs and will be using our influence on Capitol Hill to gain the introduction of a bill. When the timing is right, we will engage our Grassroots Network to voice your support for more competition in the pharmaceutical industry. In the meantime, help the NRLN grow its Grassroots Network by asking your friends to sign up at <http://capwiz.com/abtr/mlm/signup/>. Also encourage them to become an Individual Contributing Member of the NRLN by going to www.nrln.org and clicking on the "Join Us" tab at the top of the website's home page.