

February 25, 2020

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Governor of the State of Minnesota  
Office of the Governor  
130 State Capitol

The Honorable Melissa Hortman  
Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives  
463 State Office Building

The Honorable Paul Gazelka  
Majority Leader of the Minnesota Senate  
Minnesota Senate Building, #3113

Cc: Senate Minority Leader Susan Kent and House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt

Dear Governor Walz, Speaker Hortman, and Majority Leader Gazelka:

We write to express our strong support for establishing a Prescription Drug Affordability Commission in Minnesota this year. This bipartisan policy is being championed by legislators in the House and Senate and is expected to be a key recommendation from the Attorney General's Task Force on Lowering Pharmaceutical Drug Prices.

No matter where we live, what we look like, or how much money we have in our pockets, everyone gets sick. Illness reminds us that at our core, we're all human. But right now, people rationing life-saving medication are afraid for their lives. Minnesotans fear that getting sick will leave them bankrupt. Because our country hasn't enacted proper regulations, it's legal for corporations to price-gouge all of us selling medicine developed from publicly funded research. Life and health should not be for sale. Everybody deserves the best possible chance to live a healthy life, no exception. Drugs don't work if a person cannot afford them.

As drug prices continue to rise, the state has the legal authority and responsibility to take meaningful action.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Commission bill (Morrison/ Jensen) would establish an independent Commission to evaluate drug prices and maximum reimbursement levels to protect patients, state and local governments, health plans, providers, and pharmacies from excessive costs. Affordability commissions are based on the precedent of health care rate setting and commonsense state regulation of public utilities.

The consequences of inaction impact every Minnesotan. When drug corporations raise the price of medicine without justification, it hurts everyone. It raises the price of health insurance premiums, harms the health, wellbeing, and livelihood of people who can't afford the medicine they need, and takes a toll on public health. For too many Minnesotans, drug prices are an issue of life and death.

Our government has the responsibility to address this crisis caused by pharmaceutical corporations. **Therefore, we collectively urge you to act this session by establishing a Prescription Drug Affordability Commission in 2020. Together, we can enact a responsible, bipartisan solution rein in out of control drug prices that will have a positive impact on every Minnesotan.**

Sincerely,

AARP Minnesota  
AFSCME Council 5  
Land Stewardship Project  
Main Street Alliance  
Minnesota AFL-CIO  
Minnesota Farmers Union  
Minnesota Nurses Association  
SEIU Healthcare Minnesota  
SEIU State Council  
TakeAction Minnesota  
This is Medicaid