

March 27, 2023

Re: **Commerce Finance and Policy Omnibus Bill** (HF2680)

Support to **Stop Rx Price-Gouging** (A1 Sec. 4 Subd 2, A2 Sec. 23-28) establish a **Prescription Drug Affordability Board** (A1 Sec. 2 Subd 3 (d), A2 Sec. 29-34)

Dear Chair Murphy and Members of the Committee:

We write to express our strong support for policy to establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Board and stop price-gouging of the medicines Minnesotans rely on every day included in Article 1 and 2 of HF2680.

In Minnesota, we believe everyone deserves access to affordable medicine they need to be healthy and well. Today, nearly half (45%) of Minnesotans are worried about prescription drug costs, and one in five Minnesotans (21%) has rationed prescription medicine in recent years due to cost (Healthcare Value Hub, Nov. 2020). Data shows pharmaceutical companies are continuing to [hike up the price of certain drugs](#) without good reason for an increase.

Access to affordable medicine can be a matter of life and death and affects all of us. The costs show up in health insurance premiums—prescription drugs account for about 25% of premium costs—we pay a public health toll when our community members can't afford medicine they need, and Minnesotans across the state are paying the price with their lives and livelihoods.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Board will be a watchdog with the authority to set fair upper payment limits for out-of-control prescription drug costs, helping Minnesota patients, payers, purchasers, and providers address the increasing challenge of high cost drugs. The PDAB, along with increased authority to prohibit excessive price-gouging of generic prescription drugs, will ensure Minnesotans can afford the medications they need.

These solutions were recommended to the Legislature by the Attorney General's Task Force on Lowering Pharmaceutical Drug Costs. The task force included patients, experts, and a bipartisan group of legislators from the House and Senate. Five states have already enacted similar Prescription Drug Affordability Boards.

As Minnesotans continue to be harmed by out-of-control prescription drug costs, the state has the responsibility to take meaningful action, and broad public support to do so.

Eighty-seven percent of Minnesotans support this commonsense action. (Health Care Value Hub, Nov. 2020).

We urge you to stop price-gouging of prescription drugs and pass a Prescription Drug Affordability Board into law this session to lower costs and save lives.

Signed,

AARP Minnesota
AFSCME Council 5
Committee to Protect Health Care
ISAIAH
Land Stewardship Project
Main Street Alliance
Minnesota Nurses Association
MN Farmers Union
SEIU Healthcare Minnesota & Iowa
TakeAction Minnesota
We Make MN