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RE: Support for H.F. 8

February 1, 2021

Madame Chair and committee members,

TakeAction Minnesota is a grassroots organization representing 55,000 individual Minnesotans in every county in the state and 22 organizational members. We advocate for racial, gender, and economic justice at the local, state, and federal level. We are writing in support of H.F. 8.

Local and national polling speaks to the need for bold action to address prescription drug prices. A Healthcare Value Hub survey of Minnesotans in November 2020 found that 21% of respondents had cut a pill or skipped a dose due to cost pressures, and up and down the income scale many were afraid they won't be able to afford their prescriptions soon.¹

Meanwhile national polling² from January 2021 shows that more than half of voters are more concerned with pharmaceutical prices than they were prior to the pandemic, and 70% think pharmaceutical companies continue to put profits over people and that government action is necessary.

This bill recognizes that Minnesota is already paying for medication for one million Minnesotans on Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare. But we are also paying for HMOs and PBMs to add layers of cost and complication to what the state can handle more directly, resulting in significantly higher rates of growth in pharmaceutical costs in the managed care portion of Medical Assistance compared to fee-for-service.

We strongly support this effort to leverage the state's purchasing power to get a better deal and to offer the opportunity to other purchasers to benefit as well. Please support HF 8.

¹ Minnesota Residents Worried about High Cost of Drugs—Support Range of Government Solutions, Altarum Health Care Value Hub Consumer Healthcare Experience State Survey, December 2020.

² <https://www.csrpx.org/csrpx-poll-americans-expect-new-administration-congress-to-act-on-out-of-control-drug-prices-hold-big-pharma-accountable/>