



Reduce The Cost Of Prescription Drugs

A Call For Action

Talking Points:

- The percentage of the U.S. population with a prescription drug expense in 2008 was 90% for those 65 and older. In 2011, the baby boomers started reaching age 65.
- Most antibiotics, diabetes, and high blood pressure drug powders are manufactured in China and India, so the argument that offshore drugs are unsafe is invalid.
- In 2010, Medicare spent \$57 billion on prescription drugs. The NRLN estimates competitive bidding, which is not allowed now, would save Medicare \$36 billion over the next 10 years.
- The NRLN estimates if the FDA created a level playing field for generic drug approval it would save \$243 billion over the next 10 years.
- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has found that brand-name manufacturers were paying generic drug manufacturers to keep their generic drugs out of the marketplace, which directly undermines free-market access.

The NRLN advocates free-market competition and supports safety in drug production, but also strongly backs the following initiatives by Congress. To that end, the NRLN proposes that Congress pass legislation which would result in the following:

- 1) Enable re-importation and importation of safe prescription drugs approved by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA).
- 2) Enable Medicare to develop robust formularies and take competitive bids for Medicare Part D (prescription drugs).
- 3) Accelerate approval for generic prescription drugs by providing the FDA user fees and the staff to reduce excessive years of backlogs.
- 4) Prevent brand-name and generic pharmaceutical companies from colluding to keep generic drugs off the market.

The NRLN calls for action now on the above four initiatives. The demographics presently show that the nation's largest voting bloc will be seniors in 2012. Their voices are loud and clear to the NRLN that they want action on these drug initiatives implemented in 2012, because they need reasonably priced drugs now. Senior's health and financial security are at risk.

For a copy of an NRLN whitepaper on this subject, contact Marta Bascom at 703-863-9611 or marta.bascom@linkspace.net