

October 2, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Ryan, Minority Leaders Schumer and Pelosi:

For more than 25 years, the 340B drug pricing program has reduced the cost of prescription drugs for thousands of hospitals, clinics, and health centers that treat our neediest citizens. By reducing drug costs, 340B allows health care providers to stretch their resources to serve more patients and offer more services.

As the CEOs representing [more than 700 hospitals and health systems](#) from all 50 states and the District of Columbia that participate in the 340B program, we urge you to protect this vital resource as you work to drive down the costs of prescription drugs. Americans are right to be upset with the high prices being charged for new and existing drugs, and cutting back the 340B program would make these problems much worse. We are concerned about recent regulatory actions that have reduced the reach of this vital program and by legislative proposals that would undo more than two decades of bipartisan work to preserve the health care safety net.

In 2015, 340B hospitals provided \$26 billion in uncompensated and unreimbursed care to low-income and rural patients in need. That represented 60 percent of all such care delivered in the U.S. even though our hospitals comprise only 38 percent of all acute care hospitals operating in our country. Because of the savings from 340B, we are able to offer vital but often money-losing services including obstetrics, trauma care, opioid addiction treatment, and HIV/AIDS care. In many rural communities, 340B savings are the difference between hospitals staying open and closing. We do all of this without using taxpayer dollars. This is a tremendous success story.

Efforts to reduce the scope of the 340B program would not reduce the cost of prescription drugs in the U.S. and would weaken nonprofit hospitals' ability to serve patients who often have nowhere else to turn. According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, 340B discounts amount to ONLY 1.4 percent of all drug sales in the U.S. Cuts to the 340B program would transfer billions of dollars to drug manufacturers and would lead to higher prices for hospitals and patients. Cutbacks also would damage the fragile health care safety net. A study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found hospitals participating in the 340B program have operating margins that are 31 percent lower than non-340B hospitals. This is not the time to weaken one of our best tools to reduce drug costs.

We thank you for your leadership on this and all issues affecting patients, and we look forward to working together to protect this vital lifeline for the community.

Sincerely,

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