
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8025

State of Washington

58th Legislature

2003 Regular Session

By Senators Parlette, Deccio, Winsley, Reardon, Brandland, Keiser, Benton, Carlson, Shin, Esser, Mulliken, Hale, Finkbeiner, Horn, Schmidt, Johnson, Doumit, Zarelli, McCaslin, Oke and Rasmussen

Read first time 04/25/2003. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND THE SECRETARY OF THE
5 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, The use of prescription drugs improves the quality of care
10 and helps patients live healthier, longer, and more productive lives,
11 while keeping them out of more costly acute care settings in the long
12 term; and

13 WHEREAS, Expenditures for prescription drugs have been one of the
14 fastest growing components of health care spending in the last decade,
15 placing substantial strain on the budgets of individuals and public
16 programs; and

17 WHEREAS, Federal statutes, including the Omnibus Budget
18 Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA '90) and Section 340B of the Veterans
19 Health Care Act of 1992, established a pricing structure for
20 prescription drugs in the United States; and

1 WHEREAS, These federal statutes have interfered with the free
2 market and have had numerous unintended and detrimental consequences,
3 including serving as a disincentive to lower prescription drug prices
4 for most consumers and supporting inappropriate and unfair public
5 competition with the private sector; and

6 WHEREAS, The impact of this federal prescription drug pricing
7 structure is particularly hard on rural communities, where it
8 discriminates against private health care providers who serve not only
9 as an essential community "safety net," but are also a critical part of
10 the local economy with the services they provide and the workers they
11 employ; and

12 WHEREAS, Absent federal policies giving private retail
13 establishments access to lower drug prices that can be passed on to all
14 consumers, many people will continue seeking less expensive
15 alternatives in foreign countries, on the Internet, and through well-
16 intended but faulty discount programs, or will be forced to rely on
17 already overwhelmed public programs;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully request that the
19 United States Congress repeal the sections of OBRA '90 dealing with
20 prescription drug pricing and Section 340B of the Veterans Health Care
21 Act of 1992, and pass new laws which separate the cost of a
22 prescription drug from the delivery of service, thus letting the free
23 market work.

24 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
25 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
26 States, the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and
27 Human Services, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker
28 of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the
29 State of Washington.

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