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## **Lower Drug Prices Now Campaign Holds “People Over Pharma Profits” Day of Action in 30 States to Demand Affordable Medicines**

*New Polling Shows Majority Support for Comprehensive Reforms to Stop Pharma Price-Gouging*

**Washington** - As part of today’s “People over Pharma Profits” National Day of Action, advocates, community and faith leaders and patients held events in 34 states demanding that lawmakers take bold action to lower drug prices for everyone by taking away the pharmaceutical companies’ power to price-gouge patients. Constituents called on President Trump and Congress to pass comprehensive policies to hold drug makers accountable, rein in drug monopolies and guarantee all patients can get affordable medicines. In many states, local leaders also called on House Representatives to reject the administration’s proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) replacement that locks in high-prices for life-saving medications.

The Lower Drug Prices Now coalition led rallies and press conferences across the country featuring advocates, community members and impacted patients delivering giant prescription pill bottles full of postcards and petitions demanding that lawmakers take action to make prescription medicines affordable for millions who need them. Events included a press conference with Congresswoman Gwen Moore in Wisconsin, a rally with Senator Blumenthal in Connecticut and roundtable with two members of the Nevada Congressional delegation among others.

The coalition also released [new polling by Data for Progress](#) that shows large majorities want legislative solutions to stop drug corporations from jacking up prices and keep them high. Polling results include:

- An overwhelming majority, 84% (59% strongly/25% somewhat), support allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices with pharmaceutical companies.
- Only 5% oppose allowing Medicare to negotiate lower prices with pharmaceutical companies.
- 68% strongly or somewhat support allowing the production of generic versions of life-saving drugs if the government determines that a drug company has raised prices beyond patients’ ability to pay.
- 62% strongly or somewhat support allowing the production of generic versions of life-saving drugs if the government determines the price of the drug is higher in the United States than it is in other countries.

“While the president claims lowering drug costs is a priority, his administration has done nothing to take away the drug companies ability to set and keep prices high or to ensure that families can afford the medicine they need to get and stay healthy,” said **HCAN Executive Director Margarida Jorge**.

“Instead, we have gotten broken promises, gimmicks and a tax law that rewards price-gouging drug corporations with massive giveaways. It is time for every lawmaker to put people over Pharma’s profits and hold drug companies accountable for making prescription medicine affordable.”

"Americans pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs while pharmaceutical corporations are raking in billions. Older Americans are skipping doses or not filling prescriptions they need," said **Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans**. "The cost of prescription drugs in our country is outrageous, immoral and our members cannot afford to wait any longer. We need lower drug prices now."

“The American public deserves access to affordable health care—and yet, politicians are letting drug companies greed put peoples’ lives at risk,” said **Affordable Insulin Now Campaign Director Rosemary Enobakhare**. “There are approximately 30.3 million people who live with diabetes in the United States, and time and time again, it is clear that not enough is being done to make sure they can afford the insulin that keeps them alive. We need bold action now to completely overhaul the system to make affordable insulin and prescription drugs broadly a reality for all Americans.”

“People have waited for years and suffered and rationed their own access to treatment and asked Congress for help which has yet to come. Well people aren’t waiting anymore. They are getting out in the street. They will be at town halls confronting their representatives. They will be challenging Trump. We know -- our government knows -- how to lower medicine prices. It requires standing up to prescription drug corporations. It requires taking away their monopoly power. The time is now,” said **President Public Citizen Robert Weissman**.

"Nearly one in four Americans is struggling to pay for their prescription drugs, but Big Pharma continues to raise their prices, reap huge profits and enjoy big tax breaks. Instead of taking pharmaceutical companies on directly and delivering lower prices as promised, the Trump administration is bowing to the industry and proposing piecemeal changes that won't actually lower drug prices or hold these corporations accountable. The millions of Americans struggling to afford the medicines they need deserve better," said **MoveOn Campaign Director Jenn Sturm**.

“It is absolutely unacceptable that so many moms and families are rationing or going without medication they need because costs are skyrocketing,” said **Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, executive director and CEO of MomsRising**, the online and on-the-ground organization of more than one million mothers and their families. “Lowering drug prices is an issue MomsRising members care deeply about. We demand that Congress put a stop to the greed and price-gouging by pharmaceutical companies. Lives depend on it.”

“The American people are sick and tired of being ripped off by pharmaceutical corporations. Today we saw that anger turned into action across the country in red states, blue states and everywhere in between. All politicians in Washington, D.C. are on notice that they will have to pick a side in this fight, the American people or Big Pharma,” said **Social Security Works Executive Director Alex Lawson**.

"The 30,000 members of the American Medical Student Association believe everyone deserves access to quality health care and to be able to get the medicines they need at affordable prices. We also believe it's just wrong in a country as wealthy as ours that so many patients we see are forced to choose between filling their prescriptions and paying for other basic necessities, or going without treatment or into debt to get the medicines they need." said **Isaiah Cochran, M.D., National President of the American Medical Student Association**. "Physicians in Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan, Australia and other countries around the world who require drug companies to negotiate fair prices do not have patients cutting pills in half, skipping doses or refusing needed care because they can't afford the high cost of their prescriptions. It's time for our lawmakers in the U.S. to leverage federal resources to lower Rx prices and establish fair policies that put people over pharmaceutical company profits."

In 2018, nearly [28 million Americans](#) watched the costs of their medications rise over the course of a year, while pharmaceutical companies benefited from huge tax breaks and pulled in record profits. In fact, [a quarter of people with diabetes](#) lower or skip doses because they cannot afford the insulin that keeps them alive. The cost of the four most popular types of insulin has tripled over the past decade.

This happened while pharmaceutical companies like Eli Lilly -- the nation's largest insulin producer-- continued to reap billions of dollars in revenue. In 2018 alone, Eli Lilly brought in [\\$9 billion in revenue](#) from their diabetes medication while paying [\\$0 in federal income taxes](#) under the Trump tax law.

Despite President Trump's promises to tackle sky-rocketing drug prices, policies from his administration are moving in the opposite direction. Trump's new NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) deal [could raise some drug prices here](#) and handcuff Congress from enacting new policies needed to lower prices. The Trump-backed *Texas v. United States* lawsuit would take prescription drug coverage away from millions and turn back the clock on patient protections that limit out of pocket cost on prescriptions, require insurance policies to cover prescriptions as an essential health benefit and provide prescription drug discounts for seniors in Medicare Part D.

Activists are making it clear that the time for tinkering and half-measures is over. They urge lawmakers to take action and decide whether they will continue supporting Pharma control over our medicines or whether they will do the job they were elected to do and support the bold change needed to ensure working families have access to the medicine they need to be healthy.

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*[Lower Drug Prices Now](#) is a growing coalition campaign that includes Action Center on Race and the Economy, American Federation of State, Country, Municipal Employees (AFSCME), American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), Alliance for Retired Americans, American Medical Student Association (AMSA), Center for Popular Democracy (CPD), Faith in Public Life (FPL), Families USA, Health Care for America Now (HCAN), Health Care Voter Affordable Insulin Now, HousingWorks, Indivisible, MomsRising.org, MoveOn.org, Other 98%, Oxfam, People's Action, Public Citizen, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Social Security Works, UNIDOS US Action Fund, United Auto Workers (UAW). The campaign advocates for lower drug prices through reforms that rein in drug corporations' monopoly power, require the drug industry to negotiate fair prices with government; and to hold corporations accountable for price-gouging.*