



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 358-A

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to enact the Pharmaceutical Market Access Act of 2005, which would permit the importation of prescription drugs.

By Council Members Gioia, DeBlasio, James, Quinn, Brewer, Clarke, Fidler, Gentile, Gonzalez, Jennings, Liu, Monserrate, Nelson, Palma, Perkins, Reed, Stewart, Weprin and Sanders Jr.

Whereas, The United States is the world's largest market for prescription medication, and American consumers pay the highest prices in the world for such drugs; and

Whereas, The high cost of prescription drugs has become a considerable financial burden on American consumers with fixed incomes, especially the elderly; and

Whereas, The soaring cost of prescription drugs has led twenty-two percent of American seniors to intentionally skip prescribed doses in an attempt to prolong their prescriptions, or to go without their medication at all, according to a 2002 study from The Health Institute at Tufts-New England Medical Center; and

Whereas, A study done by Families USA, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the achievement of high-quality, affordable health care for all Americans, has projected the average cost per prescription for American seniors to rise by seventy-two percent between 2000 and 2010; and

Whereas, The Congressional Budget Office has determined that American seniors will spend \$1.8 trillion on prescription medication over the next ten years; and

Whereas, Canada's regulation of prescription drugs has caused Canadian drug prices to be as much as seventy-five percent lower than the cost of the same medication in the United States; and

Whereas, Over one million Americans have already purchased their prescription medication from

Canada either through mail-order pharmacies or by traveling to Canada; and

Whereas, Diane Gorman, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Canada's Health Products and Food Branch, has publicly stated that prescription drugs approved for use in Canada are safe and that Canada implements one of the world's most rigorous drug approval systems; and

Whereas, In June 2003, William Hubbard, the Associate Commissioner for Policy, Planning, and Legislation for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, publicly stated that he had not heard of any American having been harmed by a Canadian pharmaceutical product; and

Whereas, Several states have asked the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for guidance in establishing a system that would allow the states to safely import prescription drugs from Canada; and

Whereas, Rhode Island has passed a law, which took effect on January 15, 2005, to allow Canadian Pharmacies to ship prescription drugs to state residents; and

Whereas, The governors of Illinois and Wisconsin launched I-Save-Rx, the first state-sponsored program designed to help residents buy discounted prescription drugs from Canada and countries in Europe; and

Whereas, The Boston University School of Public Health has estimated that the state of Kentucky could save \$663 million by importing drugs from other countries; and

Whereas, The State of New Hampshire conducted a poll of its residents, which found that eighty-one percent of those polled supported legalizing the importation of prescription drugs from Canada; and

Whereas, The state of Maine has asked the federal government for permission to import prescription drugs from Canada; and

Whereas, The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has already established a system for certifying safety standards of factories situated outside the United States that could be used to monitor and certify the safety standards for prescription drugs imported from other nations; and

Whereas, Prescription drugs used by both Canadian and American consumers are manufactured in

facilities approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration; and

Whereas, The Pharmaceutical Market Access Act of 2005 would permit the importation of prescription drugs from specified, industrialized countries if such drugs and the facilities in which they are produced are approved by the Food and Drug Administration; and

Whereas, A bi-partisan group of Senators has also introduced alternative legislation to allow importation of prescription drugs from other nations; and

Whereas, The Bush Administration has not aggressively pursued any remedy to substantially lower prescription drug costs for U.S. consumers; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass and the President to enact The Pharmaceutical Market Access Act of 2005, which would permit the importation of prescription drugs.

TSF.
LS#'s 520, 728, 729 and 972
6.15.05