

December 1, 2022

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee,

We encourage you to take bold action this next legislative session to lower the cost of prescription drugs. As you know, the high cost of prescription drugs is a significant issue for Washingtonians and remains the primary reason patients don't take their medication as prescribed, harming their health and well-being. In addition, high costs unnecessarily burden patients with expensive bills that make it harder to pay for basic needs like rent and food.

This past session, the legislature took an important first step towards addressing the cost of prescription drugs with the passage of Senate Bill 5532, which established a Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB). The PDAB has the ability to place upper payment limits on prescription drugs that meet certain criteria, while also including protections to help ensure that patients do not lose access to these life-saving medications. Though SB 5532 lays a strong framework for the PDAB, we need to address its limitations. We hope you'll lead on this issue and ask the Health Care Authority to introduce legislation to strengthen the work of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

A [recent poll by Altarum](#) reveals some of the real impacts of high prescription drug costs on Washingtonians. The poll found that 27% of respondents cut pills in half, skipped doses of medicine or did not fill a prescription due to cost. Furthermore, respondents of color reported higher rates of rationing medication due to cost when compared to white respondents. And nearly 40% of all respondents received the care they needed, but struggled to pay the resulting bill.

There is strong public and bipartisan political support for addressing prescription drug affordability. The recent poll found that 76% of those surveyed believe that drug companies charge too much money. Congress has taken important steps to act on prescription drug prices, with critical provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act that allow Medicare to negotiate with prescription drug companies. This is an exciting step, but the impact is limited to people on Medicare.

The under-signed organizations commit to working on this issue this session and we need you to take the first step. Your leadership will send the message to legislators that we can make progress on prescription drug affordability right now. We cannot afford to wait.

For more information, please contact Jim Freeburg, Executive Director of the Patient Coalition of Washington at jifreeburg@yahoo.com or 206-245-0059.

AARP

AFT Washington Retirees Chapter

Bleeding Disorder Foundation of Washington

Economic Opportunity Institute

Health Care for All Washington

Health Care is a Human Right - WA

#Insulin4all Washington

NAMI Washington

Northwest Health Law Advocates

National MS Society

North Seattle Progressives Health & Wellness Committee

Patient Coalition of Washington

Purchaser Business Group on Health

Retired Public Employees Council of Washington

SEIU Healthcare 1199NW

34th Legislative District Democrats Health Care Caucus

Washington CAN

Washington State Nurses Association

Washington State Senior Citizen's Lobby

Washington State School Retirees Association

Whole Washington