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WHAT THEY ARE SAYING: Governor Ron DeSantis Remains Committed to Lowering Prescription Drug Prices for Floridians

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Last week, [Governor Ron DeSantis announced several actions to lower prescription drug prices for Floridians](#). The Governor issued [Executive Order 22-164](#) to provide meaningful reforms to state agency contracts with Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), and direct the Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency) to implement provisions in the Freedom First Budget and directly negotiate prices for prescriptions drugs ineligible for importation, including insulin and epinephrine.

Additionally, the Agency [filed a Freedom of Information Act Request \(FOIA\)](#) with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding the status of their review of Florida's landmark Canadian Drug Importation Program. Community leaders have recognized these actions to continue increasing transparency and accountability within Florida's pharmaceutical industry.

Here is what they are saying...

"Thank you to Governor DeSantis for continuing to push for Federal approval of Florida's Canadian Prescription Drug Importation program by filing a FOIA request to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, ensuring continued transparency in their review process," said **Senate President Pro Tempore Aaron Bean**. "In addition to this welcomed news, the 2022-23 State Budget provides additional authority for AHCA to directly negotiate prices for prescription drugs ineligible for importation – like insulin and epinephrine. I am proud to have sponsored both initiatives during my time in the Senate that disrupt the status quo and lower the cost of prescription drugs that so many Floridians rely upon."

"In 2019, I was honored to join Governor DeSantis in passing landmark legislation that would safely and directly reduce the cost of prescription drugs," said **Representative Tom Leek**. "On the 99-yard line of success, the Biden administration inserted itself into the process and used the FDA to stall the approval of this program, taking the side of Big Pharma and profits over taxpayers. Biden's pro-establishment policies do nothing but hurt Americans, and this is a great example."

"Florida pharmacies are thankful to the DeSantis Administration for protecting the health of our patients in the community and taking actions to keep drug costs affordable, said **Ben Levene, Owner, Center Pharmacy in Cape Coral**. "In helping to create a fair and competitive environment and access to quality healthcare, Governor DeSantis is ensuring we can help lower costs for our patients and the health plan payers."



"The National Association of Chain Drug Stores appreciates Governor DeSantis' action to put patients first and to stand up for the pharmacies that serve them," said **Steven C. Anderson, President, and CEO, National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)**. "By taking on these tactics of PBMs, Governor DeSantis is exerting true leadership to defend healthcare access and affordability. This is an excellent example that also would benefit patients across the nation, and it ought to be replicated."

"Florida's Canadian Prescription Drug Importation Program is a direct result of Governor DeSantis' dedication to lowering the cost of prescription drugs for Floridians," said **Melanie Brown-Woofter, President, and CEO, Florida Behavioral Health Association**. "The Florida Behavioral Health Association supports this program as it will ensure that Florida's most vulnerable are able to access medications at a savings to taxpayers."

"Scrutiny of PBMs is well-deserved, as are significant reforms to how they operate. As PBM profits soar, so do prescription drug prices for patients and taxpayers. Meanwhile, small-business pharmacies are taking care of patients even while these big drug insurance companies try to squeeze them out of business," said **Douglas B. Hoey, CEO, National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA)**. "We applaud Gov. DeSantis for recognizing that it doesn't have to be this way and are eager partners in working to investigate, rein in, and reform the massive PBMs and their insurer-partners/owners."

"AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) applauds Governor DeSantis efforts to lower drug prices for prescriptions and AHF," said **David Poole, Director of Legislative Affairs, AIDS Healthcare Foundation**. "AHF supports strong protections for the healthcare safety net providers that rely on the 340b Drug Discount Program."

"The Florida Pharmacy Association and our membership have been meeting with Governor DeSantis and the Agency for Health Care Administration about the pervasive and often unchecked issues caused by pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, for some time now," said **Michael Jackson, Executive Vice President, and CEO, Florida Pharmacy Association**. "With this Executive Order, the governor will shine the light on anticompetitive behavior and require much needed transparency in what is now an opaque process. Governor DeSantis proved, once again, that he is committed to doing what's best – and what's *right* – for Floridians."

"As we continue to push back against the Biden Administration's attempt to turn our entire healthcare system into the worst experiment in American history, it is once again a breath of fresh air to have leadership like Governor DeSantis and Secretary Marstiller doing everything, they can ensure drug prices are transparent," said **Sal Nuzzo, Vice President of Policy, The James Madison Institute**. "JMI will continue to support all efforts that make our healthcare system one that puts patients and markets first."

"As Florida's voice for independent pharmacies, applauds Governor DeSantis' decisive action to require accountability and transparency for PBMs doing business in Florida," said **Dawn Butterfield, President, Small Business Pharmacies Aligned for Reform (SPAR)**. "The reforms in his order are critical to protecting small businesses, but most importantly, ensuring medication access, choice, and affordability for patients."

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The Agency for Health Care Administration is Florida's chief health policy and planning entity. The Agency is responsible for administering the Florida Medicaid program, the licensure and regulation of nearly 50,000 health care facilities, and empowering consumers through health care transparency initiatives.