



601 E Street, NW | Washington, DC 20049
202-434-2277 | 1-888-OUR-AARP | 1-888-687-2277 | TTY: 1-877-434-7598
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July 30, 2018

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Grassley:

AARP is pleased to endorse your amendments to the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill that would require the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to compel drug manufacturers to include the price of their drugs in direct-to-consumer advertisements (DTC). AARP, with its nearly 38 million members in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps empower people to choose how they live as they age, strengthens communities, and fights for the issues that matter most to families, such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

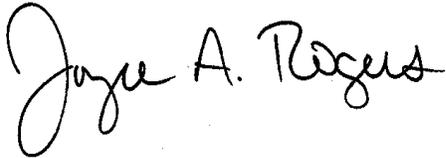
AARP strongly supports efforts to increase price transparency for prescription drugs. Prescription drugs often come to market with incredibly high launch prices, and those prices continue to increase over time. In 2015, the average increase in price for brand-name drugs widely used by older Americans was 15.5%¹. Moreover, the average Medicare Part D enrollee takes 4.5 medications every month, making drug price increases especially burdensome for older Americans.

Your amendments would clarify that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has the authority to require drug manufacturers to disclose pricing information in their DTC advertisements. It would also require the FDA to implement regulations to require price disclosure and deem any drug with advertisement that does not include a price disclosure to be misbranded. Finally, they would provide the FDA with funding to develop and implement this requirement.

¹ <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2016-12/trends-in-retail-prices-dec-2016.pdf>

AARP appreciates your leadership in helping to increase drug price transparency for the millions of older Americans struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need. If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Amy Kelbick on our Government Affairs staff at (202) 434-2648 or at akelbick@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce A. Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joyce A. Rogers
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs