

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Grassley  
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ranking Member Grassley and Senator Cantwell:

The National Community Pharmacists Association is writing today in support of S. 1388, the *Prescription Pricing for the People Act of 2021*, which would require the Federal Trade Commission to study pharmacy benefit managers and how their actions are affecting patients and small business independent pharmacies.

NCPA represents America's community pharmacists, including over 21,000 independent community pharmacies. Almost half of all community pharmacies provide long-term care services and play a critical role in ensuring patients have immediate access to medications in both community and LTC settings. Together, our members represent a \$74 billion health care marketplace, employ approximately 250,000 individuals, and provide an expanding set of health care services to millions of patients every day. Our members are small business owners who are among America's most accessible health care providers.

NCPA was proud to work with bill sponsors on this legislation last Congress to strengthen language that would shed light on how PBMs are affecting prescription costs and patient choice and bring needed transparency to the pharmaceutical space. For years, NCPA has highlighted the problems posed by increasing consolidation in the health care industry, specifically that three PBMs now control 77 percent of the market<sup>1</sup>. Most recently, NCPA has raised a multitude of significant concerns of the anticompetitive vertical integration of the CVS-Aetna merger. NCPA believes the merger will lead to decreased competition and fewer choices for patients and emphasizes that there is no evidence to support that purported cost savings will lead to lower prices for patients or be passed on to consumers. NCPA has also long been concerned about PBMs steering patients to retail or mail order pharmacies in which the PBM has an ownership interest. Advancing this legislation will empower the FTC to review the consolidated PBM industry and their anticompetitive practices, which would provide relief to patients on drug costs and protect their ability to access a pharmacy of their choice.

NCPA strongly supports passage of the *Prescription Pricing for the People Act* to bring further transparency to PBMs through retrospective reviews from the FTC and to support Congress as it crafts evidence-based solutions to address the anticompetitive role PBMs play as pharmaceutical costs continue to rise. NCPA thanks Ranking Member Grassley and Senator Cantwell for your leadership in addressing this issue, and we look forward to working with you to get this legislation across the finish line this Congress.

Sincerely,



Karry K. La Violette  
Senior Vice President of Government Affairs & Director of the Advocacy Center  
National Community Pharmacists Association

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.drugchannels.net/2021/04/the-top-pharmacy-benefit-managers-pbms.html>