

January 24, 2022

To: Members of the Washington House of Representatives
From: Americans for Tax Reform

Re: Oppose HB 1671 and SB 5532

Dear Representative,

On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) and our supporters across Washington, **I urge you to oppose House Bill 1671 and its companion, Senate Bill 5532, pieces of legislation that would establish a “Prescription Drug Advisory Board” and ultimately lead to price controls on prescription medications.** If implemented, these bills would result in a number of unintended negative consequences for patients across Washington.

The biopharmaceutical industry is one of the most heavily regulated industries in the United States. It costs more than \$2.5 billion and can take over a decade for just one new drug to make it through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process. As such, allowing for more government intervention at the state level would only make pharmaceutical development even more complicated.

Forcefully reducing the price of prescription drugs and requiring pharmaceutical manufacturers to comply with other regulatory hurdles, as would be the case under HB 1671 and SB 5532, would leave fewer resources available to invest in research and development for the next generation of lifesaving, life-improving medications. **This would jeopardize pharmaceutical innovation as well as access to current medicines, resulting in the people of Washington being left with even fewer, lower quality choices. This would actually lead to higher healthcare costs over the long term.**

Buttressing this point is experience from countries with a more heavy-handed approach to healthcare policy, which has demonstrated that government intervention neither lowers costs nor increases access. Rather, it stifles development, creates shortages, and leads to fewer choices for consumers and patients.

The best thing state lawmakers can do to mitigate rising healthcare costs is embrace free market solutions, which promote the competition that spurs innovation, improves quality, increases the number of available options, and naturally keeps prices low. **ATR opposes HB 1671 and SB 5532 and urges lawmakers to vote NO.**

Sincerely,

Grover Norquist
President
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