



## 2003 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 46

October 15, 2003 - Introduced by Senators ROBSON, BRESKE, CARPENTER, CHVALA, DECKER, ERPENBACH, LASSA and RISSER, cosponsored by Representatives SERATTI, BERCEAU, HINES, HUBER, LOTHIAN, MOLEPSKE, POCAN, TURNER, ZEPNICK, TAYLOR and MILLER. Referred to Committee on Health, Children, Families, Aging and Long Term Care.

1     **Relating to:** strongly urging Congress and the Administration to enact the  
2           Pharmaceutical Market Access Act or similar legislation allowing individuals  
3           and pharmacies in the United States to import and re-import prescription  
4           medications purchased in other countries that have regulatory safeguards for  
5           the manufacture and distribution of drugs comparable to regulatory  
6           safeguards in the United States.

7           Whereas, the practice of medicine has undergone a shift toward more  
8           utilization of outpatient prescription medications for patients who in previous years  
9           would have been hospitalized; and

10          Whereas, expenses for outpatient prescribed medicines increased from \$72.3  
11          billion in 1997, or 13 percent of total medical expenses, to \$103 billion in 2000, 16  
12          percent of total medical expenses; and

13          Whereas, between 1990 and 2001, prescription drug spending in the United  
14          States grew by about 12 percent per year; and

1           Whereas, Americans pay drug prices that are 30 to 300 percent higher than  
2 prices paid for the same drugs in European and other industrialized nations, and  
3 Canadian drug prices are on average 68 percent lower than American prices; and

4           Whereas, individuals, from young adults to senior citizens, without  
5 prescription drug coverage pay the highest prices for prescription drugs and  
6 frequently leave their prescriptions unfilled, compromising their health and leading  
7 to more costly medical intervention; and

8           Whereas, the estimated cost of prescription drug benefits for participants in  
9 state employee health insurance plans is \$125 million annually and the cost of  
10 prescription medications purchased for Wisconsin prison inmates is \$12 million  
11 annually; and

12           Whereas, if the medications in those 2 programs were purchased at the  
13 Canadian prices, the savings to Wisconsin taxpayers would be \$83 million; and

14           Whereas, taxpayers and individuals with no or inadequate health insurance  
15 need relief from the high cost of prescription drugs; and

16           Whereas, Congress twice has passed legislation to allow American pharmacists  
17 and drug wholesalers to import FDA-approved drugs from other countries, but the  
18 U.S. department of health and human services has declined to implement a drug  
19 import program; and

20           Whereas, as part of Medicare legislation being developed in Congress, the U.S.  
21 house of representatives passed the Pharmaceutical Market Access Act, which  
22 requires the federal food and drug administration, within 180 days of enactment, to  
23 design and implement a system to grant individuals, pharmacists, and wholesalers  
24 in America the ability to import FDA-approved drugs from FDA-approved  
25 manufacturing facilities in 26 industrialized nations; and

