

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

1 Whereas, this provision would also require imported medicine to be shipped in
2 antitampering and anticounterfeiting packaging; now, therefore, be it

3 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the Wisconsin
4 legislature strongly urges Congress and the Administration to enact the
5 Pharmaceutical Market Access Act or similar legislation allowing individuals and
6 pharmacies in the United States to import and re-import prescription medications
7 purchased in other countries that have regulatory safeguards for the manufacture
8 and distribution of drugs comparable to regulatory safeguards in the United States;
9 and, be it further

10 ***Resolved, That*** the Wisconsin legislature urges Congress and the
11 Administration to develop long-term solutions to bring down the price of
12 prescription medications so that we do not have to rely on imports; and, be it further

13 ***Resolved, That*** the senate chief clerk provide a copy of this joint resolution to
14 the President of the United States, to the secretary of the U.S. department of health
15 and human services, and to all members of the congressional delegation from
16 Wisconsin.

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(END)