

September 1, 2021

Dear President Biden, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As the country works to recover from the health and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, it is more important than ever to ensure that every American has access to affordable health care. A critical piece of this work is bringing down the cost of prescription drugs.

For decades, Big Pharma has had its grip on Washington, fighting tirelessly to protect its massive profits. Year after year, drug companies hike prices on lifesaving drugs while spending billions on executive pay and stock buybacks. Meanwhile, Americans pay nearly three times as much for prescription drugs as people in other countries, forcing millions of families to make impossible choices between purchasing the medicines they need to survive or paying for essentials like food or rent. While high drug costs hurt Americans from all walks of life, some groups are bearing the brunt of these costs more than others, including some of our nation's most vulnerable: seniors, children, people with disabilities, and people of color. It doesn't have to be this way.

As you negotiate upcoming budget reconciliation legislation, we, the undersigned local elected officials, urge you to prioritize giving Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices for all Americans. In 2019, the House of Representatives passed the Lower Drug Costs Now Act (H.R. 3), historic legislation that would do just that. H.R. 3 would save patients over \$150 billion and reduce the price of the costliest drugs by as much as [55 percent](#). An analysis from the Center for American Progress found that, in addition to saving patients thousands on expensive treatments for conditions like cancer and multiple sclerosis, H.R. 3 would help lower the cost of insulin for some diabetics by more than \$700 annually.

Not only does giving Medicare the power to negotiate help patients at the pharmacy counter, but it would save the federal government [\\$500 billion](#), which could be reinvested to strengthen health care for millions. These savings could help lower premiums on the ACA marketplaces, expand coverage to Americans stuck in the Medicaid coverage gap, fund health care provider shortages and strengthen Medicare benefits to include hearing, vision, and dental.

We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to finally bring down drug prices for American families. The anxiety of not being able to afford health care felt by American families across the country has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and there has never been a

more urgent time to improve the health and well-being of American families. The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

Mayor James M. Davis
City of Bayonne

Mayor Jeff Martin
Township of Hamilton

Mayor Ravi Bhalla
City of Hoboken

Mayor Sean M. Spiller
Township of Montclair

Mayor Timothy P. Dougherty
Town of Morristown