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**PATIENTS FOR PRESCRIPTION ACCESS APPLAUDS FILING OF FEDERAL 340B LEGISLATION**

***Fixes to federal program must be done on federal level, not state by state to ensure program impacts the patient population it was intended to serve***

(Dedham, Mass.) Patients for Prescription Access, a coalition of patient advocacy organizations and healthcare providers is praising federal lawmakers for introducing legislation aimed at ensuring transparency and oversight to the 340B program. Filed in the House of Representatives by U.S. Representatives Larry Bucshon, MD (R-IN-08), Buddy Carter (R-GA-01), and Diana Harshbarger (R-TN-01), the *340B Affording Care for Communities and Ensuring a Strong Safety-Net Act* (*340B ACCESS Act)* will ensure the program will be a true safety net for the low-income patients it was intended to serve.

Established in the 1990s, the 340B program requires pharmaceutical manufacturers to provide medications to 340B hospitals at significant discounts. These medications in turn are to be prescribed to under insured and uninsured patients. However, due to lax oversight, the program has ballooned, and [studies](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25288423/#:~:text=We%20found%20that%20hospital%2Daffiliated,for%20the%20program%20before%202004.) have shown ongoing abuse of the program, resulting in little to help patients in need, but instead padding the bottom lines of hospitals and pharmacy benefit managers.

“For patients who are struggling to afford their medications, this legislation could be a game changer,” said Rich Pizzello, Executive Director of Patients for Prescription Access. “The concepts behind the 340B program are admirable, but reforms to ensure that patients are getting the benefits that were intended are long overdue. We thank Dr. Bucshon, and Reps. Carter and Harshbarger for their leadership and dedication to protecting patient access to needed medication.”

When passed into law the 340B Access Act will:

Require that 340B hospitals use 340B profits to directly lower medication costs for low-income patients

Ensure the program is helping the intended patient population and cut down on abuse of the system by establishing a clear definition of a 340B patient

Establish clear and enforceable eligibility standards for hospitals enrolled in the 340B program and require increased levels of charity care in the hospital’s communities

Crack down on profiteering of PBMs and large pharmacy chains that comes at the expense of the patients and safety net providers

The legislation is especially timely, as several states across the nation were looking to create their own legislative solutions to the 340B program, which while well intended would do little to improve the program and could have bolstered some of the existing issues with 340B.

Patients for Prescription Access looks forward to supporting this legislation throughout the legislative process and urges all members of Congress to support the 340B Access Act.

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