

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 151

To encourage consumers to consult with their pharmacists in connection with the purchase and use of over-the-counter drug products.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 15, 1997

Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. BERRY, and Mr. WATKINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

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## RESOLUTION

To encourage consumers to consult with their pharmacists in connection with the purchase and use of over-the-counter drug products.

1       *Resolved,*

2   **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

3       The Congress finds the following:

4           (1) The Food and Drug Administration has  
5       proposed that the content and format of over-the-  
6       counter (OTC) drug product labels be made more  
7       user-friendly to help consumers better understand  
8       how to properly use these medications.

9           (2) Almost 60 percent of total OTC drug prod-  
10      uct sales of \$20,000,000,000 are made by commu-

1 nity retail pharmacies, where a pharmacist is avail-  
2 able for consultation with the consumer about the  
3 product.

4 (3) A significant number of potent prescription  
5 medications have been switched to OTC status over  
6 the last few years and others are likely to be  
7 switched over the next few years. Many consumers  
8 may be unaware of the potential problems that may  
9 occur when OTC and prescription drugs are inap-  
10 propriately used together, and should be encouraged  
11 to consult with their doctor and pharmacist. The  
12 pharmacist may have the only complete record of all  
13 the medications being taken by the consumer that  
14 would help avoid these problems.

15 (4) Pharmacists can help the consumer select  
16 the most cost-effective OTC drug product based on  
17 the symptoms presented to the pharmacist.

18 (5) Interaction with the pharmacist on using  
19 OTC drug product is particularly important for  
20 older Americans, who already use one-third of all  
21 prescription drug products and one-third of OTC  
22 drug products. As the population ages, older Ameri-  
23 cans are expected to use almost half of all OTC drug  
24 products by the year 2000. According to recent stud-  
25 ies, the health care system, including the Medicaid

1 and Medicare programs, incur billions of dollars in  
2 unnecessary costs each year as a result of medica-  
3 tion-related problems.

4 (6) The importance of consumer interaction  
5 with the pharmacist about OTC drug products was  
6 recognized by Congress when it required that Medic-  
7 aid prospective drug utilization review programs in-  
8 clude screening for “serious interactions with non-  
9 prescription or OTC medications”.

10 (7) Encouraging pharmacist interaction with  
11 consumers on OTC drug products is consistent with  
12 recent attempts by consumer groups, the pharmacy  
13 community, and the Food and Drug Administration  
14 to increase the quality and quantity of written and  
15 oral information being provided to consumers with  
16 their prescription medications.

17 **SEC. 2. CONSULTATION.**

18 It is the sense of the House of Representatives that  
19 the Secretary of Health and Human Services should take  
20 such action as may be appropriate to encourage consumers  
21 to consult with their pharmacists in connection with the  
22 purchase and use of over-the-counter drug products.

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