

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 225

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the illegal importation of prescription drugs severely undermines the regulatory protections afforded to United States consumers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 19, 2003

Mr. MEEKS of New York submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the illegal importation of prescription drugs severely undermines the regulatory protections afforded to United States consumers, and for other purposes.

Whereas the price of prescription drugs is unaffordable, motivating United States consumers to purchase these drugs illegally from Canada and other foreign countries;

Whereas many health experts have concluded that the illegal importation of prescription drugs will increase the flow of counterfeit drugs, cheap foreign copies of drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration, expired and con-

taminated drugs, and drugs stored under inappropriate and unsafe conditions;

Whereas recent public opinion polls show that Americans overwhelmingly think that there are numerous safety concerns about drugs being brought into the country that are not subject to the same safety standards United States consumers are accustomed to;

Whereas the illegal importation of prescription drugs severs the pharmacist-patient relationship;

Whereas the illegal importation of prescription drugs undermines the important doctor-patient relationship and ignores the crucial medical history of the patient;

Whereas the illegal importation of prescription drugs can cause severe medical complications and life-threatening conditions;

Whereas the illegal importation of prescription drugs increases safety concerns that have been voiced by numerous Federal officials (including 2 former Secretaries of Health and Human Services and 10 former Food and Drug Commissioners), the United States Custom Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services;

Whereas safe and effective medication management by pharmacists is enormously compromised when prescription drugs are treated as just another retail commodity, as opposed to powerful medications that cure illnesses;

Whereas United States consumers are unlikely to save money from the illegal importation of prescription drugs because the intended cost-savings will be absorbed by fees charged by exporters and foreign pharmacists, but United States

consumers will certainly bear all the risks of these drugs with unknown origins;

Whereas Canada's Patented Medicine Pricing Review Board sets artificial price controls on new, innovative prescription drugs that have a negative economic impact on United States consumers and the United States pharmaceutical industry; and

Whereas Canada's Patented Medicine Pricing Review Board, from an international trade perspective, undermines the goals of the North American Free Trade Agreement and shifts the entire burden of funding future research and development costs onto United States consumers: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) the illegal importation of prescription drugs
4 severely undermines the regulatory protections af-
5 farded to United States consumers;

6 (2) the President should take appropriate ac-
7 tion to prevent the illegal importation of prescription
8 drugs from Canada or any other foreign country as
9 a matter of national security and consumer protec-
10 tion;

11 (3) the United States Trade Representative
12 should take immediate action to correct the inequi-
13 ties and discrimination caused by Canada's Patented
14 Medicine Pricing Review Board;

1 (4) the pharmaceutical industry and the health
2 care community should begin a nationwide edu-
3 cational awareness program for United States con-
4 sumers regarding the dangers of imported drugs and
5 medicines;

6 (5) the pharmaceutical industry and the health
7 care community should work with United States
8 consumers to lower the price of prescription drugs;

9 (6) it is essential that United States patients
10 have access to affordable prescriptions drugs; and

11 (7) the Congress should enact a Medicare drug
12 benefit as the best and safest way for United States
13 patients to obtain their prescription drugs.

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