

RetireSafe

Standing up for America's Seniors!

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Oz,

As the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) advances the implementation of the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the agency must weigh the impacts government price setting has on everyday Americans, especially our nation's seniors. On behalf of senior advocacy organization RetireSafe, I am writing to express our continued opposition to price controls and outline our concerns with how the continued IRA rollout harms older adults across the country.

[Nearly nine in ten adults](#) 65 and older take prescription medications, with [six in ten](#) taking four or more prescription drugs daily. Older Americans depend heavily on these daily treatments to maintain or improve long-term health conditions, stay active, and prolong their lives. When the government caps the price of pharmaceuticals, innovators lose their incentives to invest substantial time, money, and other resources required to bring a new treatment to patients. Investments in research and development are expected to decrease by [\\$232 billion](#) over the next 20 years, resulting in an estimated 188 fewer small molecule treatments. Seniors bear the immediate burden of a shrinking pipeline. Losing even a single future treatment, whether a novel cancer drug or a daily heart disease medication, is an outcome that seniors who rely on new medical developments cannot afford.

Under its current structure, the "pill penalty" within the IRA remains a critical concern for senior healthcare. Because the IRA subjects small-molecule pills and tablets to price negotiations earlier than provider-administered biologics, it creates a unique disincentive for the development of this critical type of medication.

That disincentive puts a critical component of senior care at risk. Small-molecule medicines treat everything from everyday health issues such as hypertension and high cholesterol to complex conditions such as aggressive cancers. Because they can be taken at home, small-molecule medications also provide vital practical benefits that support senior independence and make life easier for mobility-restricted and rural patients who may struggle to access a provider.

America's healthcare system should never sacrifice future medical breakthroughs or patient autonomy for short-term potential cost savings. As CMS continues implementing the drug price negotiation program, RetireSafe urges the agency to keep seniors' and all patients' well-being at the center of all health policy. Protecting the treatments and cures of tomorrow is essential to that goal.

Sincerely,

Mark Gibbons
President & CEO
RetireSafe