

# **AARP**® Real Possibilities Michigan

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December 5, 2019

The Honorable Hank Vaupel, chair and  
Members of the House Health Policy Committee;

Re: **HB 4978 and HB 4979**

Dear Chairman Vaupel and committee members;

AARP is a membership organization of people age 50 and older with 1.4 million members in Michigan, and we are pleased to have the opportunity to provide our comments. We are committed to championing access to affordable, quality health care for all generations, providing the tools needed to save for retirement, and serving as a reliable information source on issues critical to Americans age 50+.

We are here today to offer our **support** for **HB 4978 and 4979** that would allow importation of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals into Michigan from Canada and other countries. AARP Michigan supports this legislation because Americans pay by far the highest prices for prescription drugs in the world. By allowing FDA-approved drugs to be purchased from other countries we will see cost savings for Michigan families and small businesses.

Our Canadian neighbors pay, on average, 30% less for the identical prescriptions found in Michigan and in some cases state residents pay up to 10 times the cost of medications in Canada. An AARP survey indicates one-third of Michiganders do not buy the drugs they are prescribed because they cannot afford to pay for them.

The pharmaceutical companies will tell you importing prescription drugs is not safe and that is NOT true. These concerns raised about importation only apply to personal importation; in fact the pharmaceutical market is already global. According to the FDA, the US imports more than 40% of its finished products and 80% of its active pharmaceutical ingredients. In addition, Federal Regulations already ensure the safety of foreign-produced drugs entering the US market and more than 30 Canadian drug manufacturers are already FDA-approved to produce drugs for the US markets.

These pharmaceutical companies are telling you these lies to scare you and to force you, your family, your friends and your constituents into paying the highest prices for lifesaving prescription drugs. This is greed and AARP Michigan is encouraging you to stand up for what is right and STOP the RX GREED.

If you have any questions please reach out to Melissa Seifert, *Government Affairs*, [mseifert@aarp.org](mailto:mseifert@aarp.org), 517-316-6393.

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