Dear Florida Legislator,

Floridians want two things that must go hand in hand: lower out-of-pocket costs and reliable access to the medicines their doctors prescribe. We appreciate your leadership to make this mission a reality.

As organizations representing patients, providers, business leaders, and community stakeholders across Florida, we are writing to share concerns about HB 697 / SB 1158, which would tie prescription drug reimbursement in Florida to prices set by foreign health systems.

While well intentioned, this approach raises concerns about patient access, continuity of care, and provider viability. HB 697 / SB 1158 could make some medicines harder to access if doctors or pharmacies are paid less than what those medicines cost. When that happens, patients may experience non-medical switching, delays, or be sent to higher-cost hospital settings instead of receiving care in their community, increasing system-wide costs. For patients managing conditions like cancer, autoimmune disease, neurological conditions, or rare disorders, even short disruptions in care can be life-altering.

Experience from other countries illustrates these risks. While nearly 90% of medicines launched globally between 2012 and 2021 are available to U.S. patients, access abroad is far more limited, about 48% in the United Kingdom, 24% in Australia, and 21% in Canada, with many patients waiting years longer for new treatments or never gaining access at all.

It's important to remember that lower prices on paper do not guarantee lower costs for patients. Although intended to lower premiums, HB 697 / SB 1158 contains no mechanism to ensure savings reach patients or reduce premiums – and experience shows savings are often absorbed elsewhere in the system.

Thankfully, Florida can pass proven, patient-first options to lower costs without risking access, including:

- Sharing negotiated discounts and rebates with patients at the point of sale
- Ensuring all co-pay assistance counts toward deductibles, and out-of-pocket limits
- Improving transparency and accountability for insurers and PBMs

We respectfully urge you to oppose HB 697 / SB 1158 and instead prioritize solutions that lower costs while protecting access to the medicines Floridians rely on.

Sincerely,

AiArthritis
American Senior Alliance
Big Bend Cares
BlackDoctor.org
Care Point Health & Wellness
BioFlorida
Biomarker Collaborative
Central Florida Behavioral Health Network
Coalition of Hematology & Oncology Practices
Community Access National Network (CANN)
Conquering The Curve, Inc.
Epilepsy Agency of the Big Bend
Epilepsy Alliance Florida
Exon20 Group
Florida Breast Cancer Foundation
Florida Pharmacy Association
Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Florida Academy of Family Physicians
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Florida Society of Clinical Oncology
Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Gaucher Community Alliance
Gilda's Club South Florida, Inc.
H.E.A.L.S. of the South
Hispanic Business Alliance
Infusion Access Foundation
International Cancer Advocacy Network (ICAN)
JAYJ Foundation for Women and Children
Levi Long Sickle Cell Association
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association
MET Crusaders
Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)
Neuropathy Action Foundation
NRG1 Energizers
Oncology Managers of Florida
PDL1 Amplifieds
Pharmacists United for Truth & Transparency
Rare Access Action Project
RetireSafe
Shak's Hope Foundation
Spondylitis Association of America
Tigerlily Foundation