Dear Louisiana Legislator:

Louisiana patients 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 the Legislature's continued efforts to help Louisiana patients afford their medicines and access the treatments their doctors prescribe.

As organizations representing patients, providers, businesses, and community groups across Louisiana, we write to highlight an opportunity this session to advance commonsense pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) reforms that lower costs and improve access to medicines.

PBMs have a significant influence on what medicines patients can access, what they pay for them, and even which pharmacy a patient can use. As Governor Landry and the Louisiana Legislature have uncovered in recent years, these decisions are often made with limited transparency, leaving patients, providers, and employers unsure whether the billions in negotiated savings are truly reaching patients.

Louisiana has an opportunity to address these challenges by advancing targeted PBM reforms that put patients first. We urge the Legislature to **support SB 337 by Senator Jimmy Harris**, a longtime champion for the patient advocacy community, which would help ensure patients can access the medicines their doctors prescribe while paying less out of pocket. These reforms would:

- **Put Patients First:** Establish a duty of care requiring PBMs to prioritize the interests of patients and their doctors, while increasing transparency and oversight of PBM practices.
- **End Incentives for Higher Drug Prices:** Require PBMs to operate under a transparent service-fee model, rather than earning income tied to the price of medicines or the size of rebates.

These reforms represent practical steps toward improving affordability while ensuring that patients continue to receive the medicines they rely on.

At the same time, we urge policymakers to approach other proposals with caution – particularly policies that rely on government price setting or bureaucratic structures that may unintentionally limit access to medicines, including:

- **Oppose Government Price Controls That Could Reduce Patient Access (SB 369):** Policies that tie medicine prices in Louisiana to price controls or foreign pricing benchmarks may sound appealing but could put patient access at risk. If pharmacies or providers cannot obtain medicines at the mandated price, patients could face delays or lose access to the treatments their doctors prescribe – without any guarantee of lower out-of-pocket costs.

- **Oppose Prescription Drug Affordability Boards (PDABs), or similar price setting bureaucracies (SB 401 / HB 918):** PDABs create new government boards tasked with reviewing prescription drug prices and determining whether certain medicines are "affordable." While intended to address high drug costs, these boards risk inserting bureaucratic review processes into treatment decisions made between a patient and provider, without addressing the real drivers of what patients pay. States that have implemented PDABs have yet to demonstrate meaningful savings for patients at the pharmacy counter. Maryland's board, the first in the nation, has operated for several years without documenting patient savings, while Colorado and Washington are still conducting affordability reviews. New Hampshire ultimately repealed its board after lawmakers determined it had no impact.

Louisiana has long led on policies that protect patient access to care. By advancing targeted PBM reforms and avoiding policies that could create new access barriers, the Legislature can continue that leadership while helping lower out-of-pocket costs for patients across the state. We respectfully urge you to prioritize solutions that improve transparency, reduce costs, and protect access to the medicines Louisianans rely on.

Sincerely,

AiArthritis
Biomarker Collaborative
BlackDoctor.org
Cancer Advocacy Group of Louisiana
Coalition of Hematology and Oncology Practices
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Community Access National Network
Epilepsy Alliance Louisiana
Exon 20 Group
H.E.A.L.S. of the South
Hope Charities
International Cancer Advocacy Network
Infusion Access Foundation
Louisiana Bio
Mauti Cancer Fund
MET Crusaders
National Infusion Center Association
National Kidney Foundation of Louisiana
NRG1 Energizers
PD-L1 Amplifieds
Pontchartrain Cancer Center
Rheumatology Alliance of Louisiana
Tigerlily Foundation
You Night Empowering Events