

RxRights petition urges Congress to allow Americans access to Canadian medicine

RxRights, a national group concerned with the high cost of medicine, has launched a petition supporting the legalization of personal importation from Canada.



ST. PAUL, MN, UNITED STATES, June 3, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- RxRights, a national group concerned with the high cost of medication, is urging consumers to [sign a petition](#) to support bills that would legalize the personal importation of authentic prescription medications from Canada.

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Lee Graczyk, lead organizer for RxRights

In January, Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) introduced S.122, the Safe and Affordable Drugs from Canada Act of 2015. Last month, Representatives Chellie Pingree (D-ME) and Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) introduced a similar bill, H.R. 2228, in the House. The legislation would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to promulgate regulations to permit individuals to import a 90-day supply of medication from Canada. It would also require the Secretary to publicize a list of approved Canadian pharmacies in order to help ensure consumer safety.

“Tens of millions of Americans skip doses and don't fill prescriptions because they can't afford to,” says Lee Graczyk,

lead organizer for RxRights. “This legislation would ensure that Americans who can't afford the high price of U.S medicine have a viable alternative.”

For the last decade or more, the FDA has looked the other way and allowed Americans to import their needed medications from abroad. Despite the fact that there isn't a clear legal precedent to permit prescription drug importation, about 5 million people each year import their medications.

The RxRights website features a map of the United States with [testimonials from Americans](#) around the country—many are desperate to find medicine they can afford and some already import their medications. The site includes only first names and states to protect anonymity, since some people who import fear prosecution. One of the testimonials is from a woman in Minnesota named Lindsey.

“I've been buying my Pulmicort asthma inhalers from a Canadian pharmacy for 7 years now...” says Lindsey. “With insurance, I would pay \$70 per inhaler (120 doses), and in Canada, I pay \$105 for 3 inhalers (200 doses each) without insurance. This is a drug that is needed to survive, and I'm going to get it any way that I can afford it.”

The RxRights petition has close to 5000 signatures, but the group would like to double or even

quadruple that number. "Our intention is to demonstrate to Congress that personal importation has widespread popular support," says Graczyk.

Prescription drugs cost twice as much, on average, in the U.S. as they do in Canada. Legislation to allow Americans to import medication from other countries has been introduced in the past but has not moved forward. These bills have bipartisan support, a rare attribute in the current Congress. In addition, popular support for addressing the problem of high drug prices has grown. Respondents in a recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll indicated that making prescription drugs affordable should be a top health care priority for Congress and the President.

RxRights is a national coalition concerned about the high cost of U.S. pharmaceuticals and is dedicated to promoting and protecting American consumer access to sources of safe, affordable prescription drugs. The RxRights website includes information on how to choose a [safe international online pharmacy](#).

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