

# New Senate PBM Bill a Powerful Step Forward in Addressing Abuses that Harm Patients

*COA Strongly Supports the Pharmacy Benefit Manager Transparency Act of 2022 to Address Destructive Impact of PBMs*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 24, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Community Oncology Alliance (COA) is extremely pleased to see that Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA), chair of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, have introduced the [Pharmacy Benefit Manager Transparency Act of 2022](#).

The Pharmacy Benefit Manager Transparency Act of 2022 is an important piece of legislation that seeks to prevent unfair and deceptive

practices by PBMs. Unchecked PBM consolidation has a negative impact on patients, physicians, employers, pharmacies, and our entire health care system. This has fueled drug costs for Americans and placed unacceptable barriers to accessible, affordable health care for patients.

COA strongly supports the Pharmacy Benefit Manager Transparency Act of 2022 and commends Senators Cantwell and Grassley for taking this important step to rein in abusive PBM practices that are increasingly crippling our health care system. This bill will lower health care costs for Americans while protecting independent pharmacy providers in Washington state and across the country. It would ban unfair pricing schemes; prohibit arbitrary claw backs of payments made to pharmacies; and require PBMs to report to the FTC how much money they make through spread pricing and pharmacy fees.

“Senators Cantwell and Grassley’s legislation is a beacon of hope in finally tackling PBM abuses that harm my patients” said Kashyap Patel, MD, COA president, a full-time practicing medical oncologist, and CEO of Carolina Blood and Cancer Care in Rock Hill, South Carolina. “For far too



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*Kashyap Patel, MD, president  
of COA*

long, my patients have faced outrageous barriers to receiving the cancer care they need, deserve, and pay for. I am incredibly thankful to Senators Cantwell and Grassley for leading the charge against abusive and secretive PBM monopolies. COA will do everything we can to support this legislation becoming a reality."

"Senator Cantwell and Senator Grassley's critical legislation will help stop PBM abuses and bring much-needed transparency to the shroud of secrecy they operate in,"

said Ted Okon, executive director of COA. "The top PBMs use their inordinate market leverage to delay and even deny patients their cancer medications, lowball payments to pharmacists resulting in pharmacy closures, and fuel drug health care costs for all Americans. The Senators' leadership is so critical and appreciated."

The Pharmacy Benefit Manager Transparency Act of 2022 comes on the heels of a hearing on ["Ensuring Fairness and Transparency in the Market for Prescription Drugs"](#) held just three weeks ago by the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Senate Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Data Security.

COA is hopeful that fixes to PBM abuses and monopolistic practices are on the horizon in Washington, D.C. and in states across the country. This includes the recent request for information on PBM business practices from the FTC that COA submitted extensive comments on. Additionally, earlier this month the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule eliminating the retroactive application of direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees, starting in 2024, requiring that they be reflected in the lowest negotiated price the patient pays at the point of sale. While far from a perfect rule, as COA noted in comments, this is a step in the right direction for reform. At the same time, other bills are before Congress to address PBM abuses, including H.R. 3258, the ["Timely Access to Cancer Treatment \(TACT\) Act,"](#) from Representatives Terri Sewell (AL-07) and Gus Bilirakis (FL-12), which would require that patients with cancer be provided their oral cancer drugs within 72 hours or be able to go to a licensed pharmacy provider of their choice.

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About the Community Oncology Alliance: COA is a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for community oncology practices and, most importantly, the patients they serve. COA is the only organization dedicated solely to community oncology where the majority of Americans with cancer are treated. The mission of COA is to ensure that patients with cancer receive quality, affordable, and accessible cancer care in their own communities. More than 5,000 people in the United States are diagnosed with cancer every day and deaths from the disease have been steadily declining due to earlier detection, diagnosis, and treatment. Learn

more at [www.CommunityOncology.org](http://www.CommunityOncology.org). Follow COA on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/oncologyCOA](https://www.twitter.com/oncologyCOA) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CommunityOncologyAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityOncologyAlliance).

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