

Pennsylvania Takes a Major Step Forward for Patient Choice in Pharmacy Access

New fiscal code language strengthens the right of qualified pharmacies to remain in Medicaid managed care networks — a bipartisan win, with more work ahead

PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Pharmacists United for Truth &

Transparency (PUTT) is celebrating a significant bipartisan legislative achievement for Pennsylvania patients: new language in the Commonwealth's fiscal code that strengthens protections for patients' right to choose their own pharmacy.



**Pharmacists United for
Truth & Transparency**

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Monique Whitney

The [new provision](#) establishes that a "qualifying pharmacy" - one that meets statutory conditions including good standing with the Pennsylvania State Board of Pharmacy and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration - is a pharmacy that a managed care organization or pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) shall contract with. Under Pennsylvania law, "shall" language carries significantly more weight than the "any willing provider" standard used in prior policy, making this one of the strongest patient-choice protections the Commonwealth has enacted to date. The language also sets clear criteria restricting when

a PBM may terminate a pharmacy in good standing, preventing pharmacies from being re-litigated over issues that have already been reviewed and resolved.

"This is meaningful progress for the patients who've been telling their stories and refusing to stay silent," said Monique Whitney, Executive Director of PUTT. "We applaud Pennsylvania legislators on both sides of the aisle for listening to constituents and working together to create solutions. But this fight isn't over until patients can walk back through the doors of the pharmacy they trust."

The provision applies statewide, not only to the pharmacy access crisis that first brought this issue to lawmakers' attention, but to all of Pennsylvania's 48 rural-designated counties, where

pharmacy deserts have left hundreds of thousands of residents without reliable access to care.

That crisis was on full display last month at a community town hall in Boswell, PA, where more than 300 residents turned out to hear a panel discuss the growing impact of PBM-driven pharmacy network terminations. [The panel](#) featured Cost Plus Drugs founder Mark Cuban, Somerset County Commissioner Pam Tokar-Ickes, Martella's Pharmacies owner Jackie Martella, and Gloria Gates CARE co-founder Dr. Zane Gates, and was moderated by PUTT Executive Director Monique Whitney.

"Martella's Pharmacies is an outstanding example of a pharmacy that truly cares for its community," said Whitney. "For decades, they've shown up for their patients in ways a mail-order warehouse never could. The change in fiscal code is proof that when patients speak up, legislators listen. It's a model for what's possible when access to care is treated as a bipartisan priority rather than a political one."

PUTT thanks the many legislators from both parties who worked to include this language in the fiscal code, and recognizes that turning out to town halls, sharing stories, and contacting lawmakers made a real difference in getting it done. Your voice is making a difference, and PUTT is committed to keeping up the pressure until every patient in Pennsylvania has the pharmacy access they deserve.

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About Pharmacists United for Truth & Transparency (PUTT)

Pharmacists United for Truth & Transparency (PUTT) is a national advocacy organization dedicated to exposing the harmful practices of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) and fighting for policies that protect patient access to independent and community pharmacies. Learn more at [TruthRx.org](https://www.truthrx.org).

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