



# PHARMACISTS UNITED FOR TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **PUTT CONGRATULATES NEVADA STATE SENATE ON PASSAGE OF DRUG PRICING TRANSPARENCY LAW, CALLS ON OTHER STATES TO ENACT SIMILAR LEGISLATION**

#### **New Law Requiring Drug Makers and PBM Middlemen to Disclose Pricing, Rebates Kept and Removing “Gag Clause” on Pharmacists Is Model Legislation for Protecting Patients**

Phoenix, AZ (June 28, 2017) – Together with the Nevada Pharmacists Association, Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency (PUTT) offered congratulations to citizens and the state legislature of Nevada for the passage of SB 539, a landmark bill requiring pricing transparency from drug manufacturers and Pharmacy Benefits Management (PBM) “middlemen” responsible for negotiating the prices patients and payers pay for those drugs.

“We appreciate the efforts of Sen. Yvanna Cancela and the other members of Nevada’s legislature who put differences aside to create a bill that would put patients before politics,” said Teresa Stickler, PUTT president. “We call on the other states who are working on similar legislation to follow the great example set by the State of Nevada, and enact legislation that puts drug pricing information in the hands of those who need it most - patients and their family members.”

The new law takes aim at manufacturers of insulin and other drugs used to treat diabetes, requiring manufacturers and PBMs that include those medications on their formularies (lists of drugs covered by insurance) to list price increases and disclose any rebates offered or kept by the PBM. The law also allows pharmacists to disclose to patients when a cheaper version of a drug not covered by the insurance is available. In most cases, pharmacists are required to observe a “gag clause” prohibiting them from informing patients about less expensive generic alternatives.

“Transparency is critical to understanding how prescription medications are priced and reimbursed,” said Ms. Stickler. “Patients are entitled to understand how their medications are priced, why some are covered by prescription drug plans and others aren’t, and who gets the benefit of rebates and reimbursements. And pharmacists are entitled to act as partners in the care and treatment of their patients.

Eliminating the ‘gag clause’ will allow Nevada pharmacists to be full partners in caring for their patients.”

Khanh Pham, Nevada Pharmacists Association president, added, “Diabetes is ranked 7th in leading causes of death in Nevada. We must focus on the prevention of diabetes, help patients with diabetes confront barriers in access to care, and ensure patients are properly educated on the treatment of their disease.” Though she believes SB 539 is somewhat limited in its ability to help patients get the education they need, she fully endorsed the transparency aspects of the new law and hopes patients will take advantage of the opportunity to educate themselves on drug pricing.

Led by Ms. Stickler and the PUTT Board of Directors, PUTT has been speaking out on how PBMs create an anti-competitive business environment that ultimately hurts patients and taxpayers by threatening small business and community pharmacies. PUTT, who is calling on Congress to demand transparency from the PBM industry, recently unveiled a new, multi-media campaign on its website entitled “#PBMReform” to arm patients, taxpayers and pharmacists with information and resources they need to contact their legislators about unfair PBM practices.

Originally intended to process prescription claims, PBMs portray themselves as helping reduce costs by verifying claims and providing authorizations. However, PBMs are nothing more than the middle men in the pharmacy industry. The largest PBMs have recently been called out on questionable pricing, unfair practices and passing on costs that make it difficult for all, including the largest pharmacy chains, to do business. The result is an un-level playing field that has forced hundreds of independent pharmacies, often serving small and/or rural communities, out of business.

Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency (PUTT) exists to unify, promote and preserve independent pharmacies through education and access; to monitor PBM and other industry practices which, when identified as abusive, are exposed in various manners in the interest of improving the quality, safety and cost of patient care. For more information about the negative impact of Pharmacy Benefits Management company practices on the cost and accessibility of medications, or to learn more about PUTT, visit [TruthRx.org](http://TruthRx.org) or contact Monique Whitney, (505) 480-4150.

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