

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

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**MEMORANDUM**

**July 22, 2019**

**To: Committee Members**

**Fr: Majority Staff**

**Re: Hearing on “The Patient Perspective: The Devastating Impacts of Skyrocketing Drug Prices on American Families”**

On **Friday, July 26, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Committee will hold a hearing to examine the impact of high prescription drug prices on the daily lives of patients who are most directly affected.

**I. BACKGROUND**

Drug companies have continued to drastically increase the prices of prescription drugs in recent years, while also enjoying record profits. Companies have raised the prices of more than 3,400 drugs in 2019 alone, with an average price increase of five times the rate of inflation.<sup>1</sup>

This past January, the Committee launched an investigation into the actions of drug companies in raising prescription drug prices in the United States. Through this investigation, the Committee has examined the strategies used by drug companies to maintain high prices, as well as the effects of these actions on American families. According to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, nearly a quarter of people taking prescription drugs report that it is difficult for them to afford their medications, with a disproportionate impact falling on those with low incomes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Drug Prices in 2019 are Surging, with Hikes at 5 Times Inflation*, CBS News (July 1, 2019) (online at [www.cbsnews.com/news/drug-prices-in-2019-are-surging-with-hikes-at-5-times-inflation](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/drug-prices-in-2019-are-surging-with-hikes-at-5-times-inflation)).

<sup>2</sup> *Poll: Nearly 1 in 4 Americans Taking Prescription Drugs Say It's Difficult to Afford Their Medicines, Including Larger Shares Among Those with Health Issues, with Low Incomes and Nearing Medicare Age*, Kaiser Family Foundation (Mar. 1, 2019) (online at [www.kff.org/health-costs/press-release/poll-nearly-1-in-4-americans-taking-prescription-drugs-say-its-difficult-to-afford-medicines-including-larger-shares-with-low-incomes](http://www.kff.org/health-costs/press-release/poll-nearly-1-in-4-americans-taking-prescription-drugs-say-its-difficult-to-afford-medicines-including-larger-shares-with-low-incomes)).

## **II. HEARING PURPOSE**

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the impact of large pharmaceutical companies' pricing practices on the financial well-being and health of American patients who depend on prescription drugs.

## **III. WITNESSES**

**Ashley Krege**  
Patient  
Houston, Texas

**Sa'ra Skipper**  
Patient  
Indianapolis, Indiana

**Pam Holt**  
Patient  
Grangier, Indiana

**David Mitchell**  
Patient  
Founder, Patients for Affordable Drugs  
Potomac, MD

**Additional Witnesses TBD**

Staff contacts: Ali Golden, Jennifer Gaspar, or Miles Lichtman at (202) 225-5051.