



**AMERICAN ACADEMY of
DERMATOLOGY | ASSOCIATION**

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March 12, 2019

The Honorable Peter Welch (D-VT)
U.S. House of Representatives
2187 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David McKinley (R-WV)
U.S. House of Representatives
2239 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Cicilline (D-RI)
U.S. House of Representatives
2233 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Welch, Rep. McKinley and Rep. Cicilline:

The American Academy of Dermatology Association (Academy), which represents more than 13,800 dermatologists nationwide, is pleased to offer its support for H.R. 985, the "Fair Access for Safe and Timely (FAST) Generics Act," which is intended to promote a more competitive drug market by creating a pathway to expedite generic drugs to market. Dermatologists diagnose and treat more than 3,000 diseases, including skin cancer, psoriasis, immunologic diseases and many generic disorders. One in four Americans suffers from a skin disease.

The Academy appreciates that H.R. 985 would not only facilitate more affordable drugs to market, but also ensures that safety protocols continue to be held to a high standard and reaffirms the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) oversight authority in determining safety requirements. Dermatologists are committed to providing the most effective and cost-efficient care and therapies to their patients. Patients suffering from chronic, disabling skin conditions need access to affordable medication that is not only medically necessary, but life-changing and often life-saving. The Academy supports removing barriers to the development and entry of generic drugs in the marketplace, which will increase competition and lower prices of pharmaceuticals.

Dermatology drugs have been disproportionately impacted by rising drug prices. A report published by the Government Accountability Office in August 2016, *Generic Drugs Under Medicare: Part D Generic Drug Prices Declined Overall, but Some Had Extraordinary Price Increases*, noted that while the overall cost of generic drugs has decreased in recent years, there were a few categories of drugs that saw extraordinary price increases. The report highlighted that topical drugs that account for only eight percent of all established drugs represented 46 percent of all extraordinary price increases between 2011 and 2012. When drugs become cost-prohibitive for patients,

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they often go without. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “nearly 18% of chronically ill Americans report underusing medications and delaying or not fulfilling therapeutic recommendations because of cost,” and “56% of American adults with common chronic diseases self-report nonfulfillment of medication as a result of financial hardship.”¹

The Academy has made patient access to affordable treatments and transparency in drug pricing a top priority. We appreciate your targeted effort to address drug pricing costs by facilitating a more competitive drug market. Please feel free to contact Christine O’Connor, the Academy’s Associate Director; Congressional Policy at coconnor@aad.org or (202) 609-6330 if you have any questions or if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Hruza".

George J. Hruza, MD MBA FAAD
President, American Academy of Dermatology Association

¹ Patel MR, Kruger DJ, Cupal S, Zimmerman MA. Effect of Financial Stress and Positive Financial Behaviors on Cost-Related Nonadherence to Health Regimens Among Adults in a Community-Based Setting. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2016;13:160005.