



RI Department of Health
Three Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 771
www.health.ri.gov

March 6, 2025

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
State House
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 5853 – An Act Relating to Food and Drugs – Wholesale Prescription Drugs Importation Program

Dear Chair Donovan:

Please accept this letter regarding H 5853, legislation that would establish the Wholesale Prescription Drug Importation Program, for the importation of wholesale prescription drugs from Canada, to provide savings to Rhode Island consumers. The program would require the designation of a state agency to become a licensed drug wholesaler or to contract with a licensed drug wholesaler; ensure that only drugs approved by the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are imported; import only drugs expected to generate savings; and prohibit the distribution or sale of these drugs outside of Rhode Island.

Please be informed that the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) has provisions in place in its existing pharmacy regulations should consumers wish to purchase prescription drugs from Canada. The federal government is also exploring the feasibility of allowing prescription drugs to come into the US from wholesalers in Canada. There are many concerns the FDA has about this process and its impact on the US prescription drug supply chain from a consumer-safety perspective. Rhode Island should consider participating in a Wholesale Prescription Drug Importation program upon the development of an FDA-approved process that protects consumers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome M. Larkin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD
Director

CC: The Honorable Teresa A. Tanzi
The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services
Nicole McCarty, Chief Legal Counsel
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy