

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Online pharmacies give millions of Americans, like me, an alternative to the high price of prescription medication. I am writing to urge you to take political action and to support measures to ensure a thriving Canadian online pharmacy industry.

I believe you should hear from an average citizen who has benefited from buying prescriptions online to balance what you may hear from pharmaceutical company representatives and lobbyists.

The US is one of the only industrialized countries without price controls to protect its citizens. The cost of prescription medications increases every year and today 45.8 million Americans are without government or private health insurance coverage (US Census Bureau 2004 figures). Many who have to manage several chronic conditions are forced to choose between purchasing medications versus other life necessities.

Why are drug prices so high? While the drug industry would have you believe the high cost of drugs in the US supports research and development (R&D), this is untrue according to community watchdog group Public Citizen as well as Dr. Marcia Angell, a former editor of the New England Journal of Medicine. They say pharmaceutical companies inflate R&D expenses in several ways, such as by reporting R&D expenses without taking tax breaks and government grants into consideration, and by licensing or acquiring innovative research from government and university labs rather than developing it in-house.

According to Dr. Angell, of the \$200 billion in annual revenues Big Pharma generates selling drugs in the US, the industry spends only \$20-24 billion (10-12 per cent) on launching new drugs to the market. Compare that to the \$70 billion (35 per cent) spent on marketing and administration!

By purchasing my medications from a licensed Canadian online pharmacy, I realize several benefits. Foremost, I obtain the same medication available in the US at a substantial cost saving. The quality and effectiveness of the medication are the same, and I maintain my health in an affordable, safe and convenient way.

I appreciate your consideration and sincerely hope you have a better understanding of why citizens need alternatives such as online pharmacies.

Yours truly,

Sign Name \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_