

Durbin Joins Introduction Of New Bill To Cap Costs Of Insulin Nationwide

February 18 2022 10:11 AM



WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) joined U.S. Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-GA) in introducing new legislation to cap the out-of-pocket cost of insulin. The [Affordable Insulin Now Act](#) will require Medicare plans and private group or individual health insurance plans to cap patients' out-of-pocket costs for insulin at \$35 per month. This will dramatically reduce costs for millions of patients with diabetes and save money for hardworking Americans.

According to one [estimate](#), patients with diabetes spend close to \$6,000 annually on insulin alone—despite insulin being discovered more than 100 years ago and its patent being sold for \$1. The three most popular forms of insulin today have had their prices increased dozens of times to more than \$300 per vial, despite being sold for a fraction of the price in Canada and Europe.

“It’s unconscionable that Illinoisans are forced to ration their supply of life-saving insulin because of the greedy and outrageous prices set by Big Pharma,” said Durbin. “We cannot let hardworking Americans, who rely on this medication, to suffer. In signing on to the *Affordable Insulin Now Act*, I hope we can finally take action on this issue and reduce medication costs for patients.”

Under the *Affordable Insulin Now Act*, private group or individual health insurance plans would be required to cover one of each insulin dosage form (vial, pen) and insulin type (rapid-acting, short-acting, intermediate-acting, and long-acting) for no more than \$35 per month. Medicare Part D plans, both stand-alone drug plans and Medicare Advantage drug plans, would be required to charge no more than \$35 for whichever insulin products they cover in 2023 and 2024, and for all insulin products beginning in 2025.

Costs to treat diabetes have continued to rise for many Americans: according to the Health Care Costs Institute, insulin prices nearly [doubled](#) from 2012 to 2016, with the average price for a 40-day supply of insulin increasing from \$344 to \$666 during that span. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [medical costs](#) and lost work and wages for people with diagnosed diabetes total \$327 billion yearly, and the American Diabetes Association has [asserted](#) that diabetics account for \$1 of every \$4 spent on health care in the U.S. At the same time, a 2021 bipartisan staff [report](#) from the Senate Finance Committee found that “manufacturers are retaining more revenue from insulin than in the 2000s,” and that “the amount of revenue pharmaceutical manufacturers are retaining from insulin has risen.”

In 2019, Durbin passed [bipartisan legislation](#) to accelerate approvals by the Food and Drug Administration of lower-cost, generic forms of insulin—helping to reduce prices of this life-saving medicine for patients with diabetes.

In addition to Durbin, the *Affordable Insulin Now Act* is cosponsored by U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Jack Reed (D-RI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Chris Murphy (D-CT).

The legislation is also endorsed by: Protect Our Care; American Diabetes Association, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); American Federation of Teachers, Community Catalyst, Public Citizen, and Social Security Works.