

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 15, 2017

CONTACT:

Dagny Akeyson

(818) 760-2121

dakeyson@fionahuttonassoc.com

Health Plans Statement on SB 17 (Hernandez)

Comment from California Association of Health Plans' President & CEO

Sacramento, CA – State Senator Ed Hernandez (D-West Covina) was joined by consumer advocates, labor representatives and other California leaders today as he introduced SB 17, which will bring much-needed transparency to prescription drug pricing. The introduction of SB 17 marks the third time in three years that California legislators have pushed to shine a light on how the pharmaceutical industry prices its products.

Despite the wide-ranging and growing coalition of Californians engaged in the push to bring light to the industry's pricing tactics, previous bills - SB 1010 (Hernandez) and AB 463 (Chiu) - were killed by opposition from drug companies that wish to continue operating in the dark. This year's bill comes at a time when prescription prices are reaching all-times highs: insulin prices have jumped 700-percent in the past two decades; orphan drugs bear price tags that rival homes; and generic drug prices are doubling across the board.

California Association of Health Plans' President and CEO Charles Bacchi offered the following statement in response to SB 17's introduction:

“Escalating prescription drug prices are posing a clear threat to California families, to state programs and to the overall affordability of our health care system. But, instead of truly addressing the problem, we've now pushed solutions to the curb three years in a row. The time for talking is over, now is the time for action – we need to pass SB 17.

“California has been a health care leader for years, helping millions gain access to comprehensive, affordable health care coverage. As we consider how to safeguard the health of our state's residents in the years ahead, we must again step into a leadership role and enact much needed reforms to finally bring prescription drug pricing out of the dark.”

###

CAHP is a statewide association representing 48 full-service health plans. Through legislative advocacy, education and collaboration with other member organizations, CAHP works to sustain a strong environment in which our member plans can provide access to products that offer choice and flexibility to the more than 25 million members they serve. For more information, please visit <http://www.calhealthplans.org/> or call (916) 552-2910.