

March 8, 2018

The Honorable Claire McCaskill  
United States Senate  
503 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Senator McCaskill:

We welcome the Patient Advocacy Transparency Act, which will expand the Physician Payments Sunshine Act to include disclosure of pharmaceutical and medical device company payments to advocacy organizations, professional societies, and other third parties. Pharmaceutical and medical device companies spend enormous sums of money influencing physicians' prescribing habits, but they also fund patient advocacy groups, professional organizations, public relations firms, and medical education and communication companies.

The vast majority of health-oriented non-profit groups are industry-funded. Industry spends tens of millions of dollars annually on influencing non-profit groups to support activities that can influence drug policy, support high prices, and help create, expand, or maintain the market for specific drugs. Industry-funded nonprofit groups associated with the Pain Care Forum, for example, opposed state measures aimed at restricting opioid prescriptions.

Currently, non-profit groups are not legally required to disclose how much money they receive from industry, or which companies fund them (a few voluntarily disclose payments). It is vital for consumers, journalists, researchers, and policymakers to know which pharmaceutical companies support which groups – and how much money they give. This legislation will provide the public with a powerful tool to ensure that advocacy groups and professional associations serve the public interest. The undersigned groups and individuals enthusiastically support the Patient Advocacy Transparency Act.

Sincerely,

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*None of the organizations above accept pharmaceutical company funding.*

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