

January 21, 2022

Senator Richard L. Saslaw  
Chairman of Senate Commerce and Labor Committee  
900 E. Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

*RE: Support SB 376, Prescription Drug Affordability Board; established, drug cost affordability review, report.*

Dear Chairman Saslaw and other members of the Committee:

We urge you to support SB 376, which would establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Review for the purpose of protecting state residents, state and local governments, commercial health plans, health care providers, pharmacies licensed in the Commonwealth, and other stakeholders within the health care system from the high costs of prescription drug products. This legislation would help address the high cost of prescription drugs, which has an impact on small businesses that are struggling to offer healthcare benefits to their employees.

According to [AARP](#), between 2015 and 2019, the average annual prescription drug cost for Virginians rose by more than 26%. With the pandemic continuing to create setbacks for our small business community, owners need relief in our healthcare system, including increasing drug costs. In a recent [scientific opinion poll](#), the most popular healthcare policy proposal among respondents was to bring down the price of prescription drugs, with 90% in support. Small business owners in particular not only want this policy, but need this policy. With more than [4 in 10](#) (41%) small businesses citing healthcare costs as a key factor that could harm their business, passing SB 376 is critical.

Virginia needs a Prescription Drug Affordability Board to make medicines more affordable for entrepreneurs and to rein in out-of-control price hikes that are hurting Virginians. A Prescription Drug Affordability Board would be a small, independent, group of healthcare experts that evaluates the affordability of prescription drugs and sets reasonable payment rates to protect consumers from harmful costs.

We urge you to vote yes on SB 376 to create a Prescription Drug Affordability Board with the ability to deliver real savings for Virginians, including our small business community.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash  
Government Affairs Director  
Small Business Majority