



RunawayRx, a project of the California Association of Health Plans, highlights noteworthy articles and information on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing.

The Sacramento Bee Editorial Board and opinion writer Jon Healey of the Los Angeles Times weighed in with support for California Senate Bill 1010, which would bring much-needed transparency to prescription drug prices and will be heard in the Assembly Health Committee on Tuesday. This straight-forward legislation is supported by 60+ organizations – including the California Democratic Party, AARP and Consumers Union.

Let's shed some light on the high price of drugs
The Sacramento Bee Editorial Board
June 20, 2016

THE SACRAMENTO
BEE
The Fresno Bee

“The Affordable Care Act has done much to rein in the rising cost of health care, not least in subjecting the system to some much-needed transparency...

“Apples-to-oranges language that once confused consumers has been clarified across the health care economy – with one exception: Drug prices have been exploding. And no one seems able to pinpoint why...

“[W]hich is why Sen. Ed Hernandez, D-West Covina, has been pushing legislation to bring some transparency to drug pricing.

“[SB 1010] would require drugmakers to give purchasers some notice and justification before they hike the price of big-ticket drugs on the market, and require health plans and insurers to identify which drugs are driving spending.

“Lawmakers in the Assembly should follow the Senate’s lead and approve it. Sunshine is the best medicine.”

“It’s basic stuff, really, but drug companies are kicking and screaming. At least 25 pharmaceutical makers, biotech companies and pharma trade organizations reported lobbying on SB 1010 just in the first quarter of this year...

“SB 1010 supporters include business, labor, patients, health care providers and organizations from the AARP to the Valley Industry and Commerce Association. It doesn’t impose price caps or tamper with the market. It simply asks for some basic information.”

<http://www.sacbee.com/opinion/editorials/article84547602.html>

Cutting through the drug manufacturers’ smokescreen on SB 1010
Jon Healey | June 20, 2016

LA
Times

“When the pharmaceutical industry feels threatened by lawmakers or regulators, it often plays what I call the ‘Miracle Cure card.’ Here’s how that works. The industry trots out one or more gravely ill people whose lives have been prolonged or even saved by a drug the industry spent an enormous amount of money developing. Then it warns that the pipeline of such miraculous drugs will shut down if the industry is forced to do what lawmakers (or regulators) are proposing...

“Wait, what? SB 1010 ... would require drug makers simply to disclose more information, and only under certain conditions. In particular, manufacturers would be required to give insurers more advance notice and a more complete explanation when they increase a drug’s price by at least 10% or when they introduce a new medicine priced at more than \$10,000 a year.

SB 1010 “wouldn’t open the door to price controls, but it would be a step toward enlightenment on prescription drug spending.”

“... The point is to give policymakers a better picture of what’s happening with drug prices in California and how that’s affecting consumers...

“[I]t’s not clear what policymakers could or should do in response to the rise of hyper-expensive medications or in the face of Shkreli-style gouging. They — and the public — need more information about what’s actually happening in the market.”

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-drug-price-transparency-bill-20160619-snap-story.html>

The California Association of Health Plans’ RunawayRx project sheds light on the acceleration of prescription drug pricing and how it impacts health care affordability, encouraging a route toward sustainable pricing. For more information, please visit www.RunawayRx.org or follow us on Twitter at [@Runaway_Rx](https://twitter.com/Runaway_Rx).