

**AMSPECBLOG****Annotated PhRMA Health Care Statement**

By Doug Bandow on 3.22.10 @ 6:07AM

After spending \$100 million to get the government to encourage us to buy more drugs, PhRMA predictably put out a victory statement. I've helpfully annotated it:

**PhRMA Statement on Health Care Reform**

WASHINGTON, March 22 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), WHICH INVESTED \$100 MILLION TO EXPAND GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, issued the following statement today on passage of comprehensive health care reform and accompanying reconciliation legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives:

"We continue to believe that comprehensive health care reform will benefit OUR MEMBERS BY INCREASING INSURANCE COVERAGE AND THUS THE NUMBER OF PILLS SOLD. FOR THE RECORD, WE ALSO CLAIM THAT THE LEGISLATION WILL BENEFIT patients and the future of America. TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS IS why we have been involved in this important public policy debate for more than a year and why we CUT A DEAL WITH THE WHITE HOUSE. THAT DEAL REQUIRED US TO support action by the House to approve the Senate-passed bill along with the amendments found in the reconciliation legislation.

"The existing barriers to quality health care simply are not acceptable. IT IS ESPECIALLY OUTRAGEOUS THAT NOT EVERYONE IN AMERICA BUYS AS MANY PHARMACEUTICALS AS WE WOULD LIKE TO SELL. Today's important and historic vote in the House will help to expand health care coverage and services to tens of millions of Americans who are uninsured and often forced to forego needed medical treatments--MOST IMPORTANT, THE MEDICINES THAT WE MAKE.

"Our commitment to help pay for health care reform will require all of our companies to make some difficult choices moving forward - on top of already losing more than 150,000 jobs since 2007 because of the recession and other economic factors. NOT THAT IT WILL REALLY BE

THAT HARD, SINCE WE WILL SELL A LOT MORE PILLS, AND THUS END UP AHEAD FINANCIALLY. BUT WE HAVE TO ACT LIKE PUSHING FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT AS OUR SALES AGENT WAS A HARD DECISION.

"But throughout this long process, we have been guided by a belief that all Americans should have access to high-quality, affordable health care coverage and services--AT LEAST, TO HIGH-QUALITY, APPROPRIATELY PRICED DRUGS. WHETHER AMERICANS ARE ABLE TO AFFORD ANYTHING ELSE REALLY ISN'T OUR CONCERN. This legislation, while not perfect, is a step in that direction AND WILL GREATLY BENEFIT OUR MEMBERS AS A RESULT.

"Even as we support health care reform legislation, we continue to have concerns about a number of issues including the overly broad powers of a non-elected Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), which could enact sweeping Medicare changes without action by Congress and would not be subject to judicial or administrative review. AFTER ALL, OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO INCREASE OUR REVENUES. WE DON'T WANT SOME BUREAUCRATS BURIED IN HHS OR SOMEWHERE ELSE IN WASHINGTON CUTTING BACK ON OUR REIMBURSEMENTS. We look forward to working with Congress to address these concerns and to identify ways to contain medical costs without creating new barriers to quality health care--NAMELY, THE PURCHASE OF MORE DRUGS MADE BY OUR MEMBERS.

"Most importantly, we must also take steps in the years ahead to support critically needed innovation, ensuring future medical advancements and breakthroughs. JUST BECAUSE WE WILL BE SUPPING DEEPLY AT THE PUBLIC TROUGH IS NO REASON FOR CONGRESS TO EXPECT US TO CUT BACK AS HEALTH CARE COSTS EXPLODE. Americans deserve no less. AT LEAST, OUR MEMBERS DESERVE NO LESS. New, cutting-edge medicines have dramatically increased life expectancy rates all across our nation and allowed patients to live longer, healthier and more productive lives. AND WE KNOW THAT BY EXPANDING GOVERNMENT CONTROL WE HAVE OPENED OURSELVES TO TOUGHER PRICE REGULATION. WE ARE JUST HOPING THE REPUBLICANS WILL STUPIDLY FORGIVE AND FORGET, AND PROTECT US WHEN OUR NEW DEMOCRATIC ALLIES INEVITABLY TURN ON US. We remain totally committed to seeing this progress continue, benefiting Americans for generations to come."

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents the country's leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives--AND MAKING MONEY, WHICH IS, AFTER ALL, THE AMERICAN WAY. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures. PhRMA members alone invested an estimated \$45.8 billion in 2009 in discovering and developing new medicines. Industry-wide research and investment reached a record \$65.3 billion in 2009. WHICH IS WHY WE JUST SPENT A LOT OF MONEY TO GET THE GOVERNMENT TO GET THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO SPEND A LOT MORE MONEY WITH US!

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