SENATE BILL 19-005

Concerning wholesale importation of prescription pharmaceutical products from Canada for resale to Colorado residents.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill creates the "Colorado Wholesale Importation of Prescription Drugs Act", under which the department of health care policy and financing (department) shall design a program to import prescription pharmaceutical products from Canada for sale to Colorado consumers. The program design must ensure both drug safety and cost...
savings for Colorado consumers. The department shall submit the program design to the secretary of the United States department of health and human services and request the secretary's approval of the program, as required by federal law, to import Canadian pharmaceutical products. If the secretary approves the program, the department shall implement the program. The department shall adopt a funding mechanism to cover the program's administrative costs, and the department shall annually report on the program to the general assembly.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

(a) United States consumers pay some of the highest prescription drug prices in the world, and it is estimated that United States consumers pay twice as much as the amount Canadian consumers pay for patented prescription drugs and twenty percent more for generic drugs;

(b) Federal law, as codified in 21 U.S.C. sec. 384, authorizes the secretary of the United States department of health and human services to allow wholesale importation of prescription drugs from Canada if such importation is shown to be both safe and less costly for United States consumers;

(c) Although importing prescription drugs would be less costly, there may be risks posed to consumer health and safety if the source, quality, and purity of prescription drugs sold by online pharmacies cannot be verified;

(d) Canada has a rigorous regulatory system to license prescription drugs, equivalent to the licensing system in the United States;

(e) In the United States, Title II of the federal "Drug Quality and Security Act", Pub.L. 113-54, referred to as the "Drug Supply Chain Security Act", has significantly improved drug security and safety through
a system of pharmaceutical product track-and-trace procedures; and

(f) A wholesale drug importation program for the exclusive benefit of Colorado residents should be designed and implemented to provide Colorado consumers access to safe and less expensive prescription drugs.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 25.5-1-201, amend (1) introductory portion, (1)(f), and (1)(g); and add (1)(h) as follows:

25.5-1-201. Programs to be administered by the department of health care policy and financing. (1) Programs to be administered and functions to be performed by the department of health care policy and financing shall be as follows: ADMINISTER THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS AND PERFORM THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:

(f) The old age pension health and medical care program, as specified in section 25.5-2-101; and

(g) Programs, services, and supports for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as specified in article 10 of this title; and

(h) Any program concerning the wholesale importation of prescription drugs pursuant to part 2 of article 2.5 of this title.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add part 2 to article 2.5 of title 25.5 as follows:

PART 2

WHOLESALE IMPORTATION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

25.5-2.5-201. Short title. The short title of this part 2 is the "COLORADO WHOLESALE IMPORTATION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ACT".

25.5-2.5-202. Definitions. As used in this part 2, unless the
1 CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:
2
3 (1) "ACTUAL ACQUISITION COST" MEANS THE PRICE PAID FOR AN
4 IMPORTED PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT BY A WHOLESALER
5 UNDER THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM.
6
7 (2) "CARRIER" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN SECTION
8 10-16-102 (8).
9
10 (3) "IMPORTATION PROGRAM" MEANS A PROGRAM ADMINISTERED
11 BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS PART 2.
12
13 (4) "LICENSED PROVIDER" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS LICENSED TO
14 PRESCRIBE PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS TO CONSUMERS BY A HEALTH
15 CARE PRESCRIBER BOARD DESCRIBED IN SECTION 24-34-112 (1)(a).
16
17 (5) "SECRETARY" MEANS THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES
18 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.
19
20 25.5-2.5-203. Wholesale drug importation program - state
21 department to design program - program requirements. (1) ON OR
22 BEFORE JULY 1, 2020, THE STATE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH
23 RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS AND FEDERAL AGENCIES, SHALL DESIGN AN
24 IMPORTATION PROGRAM TO IMPORT PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL
25 PRODUCTS FROM ONE OR MORE LICENSED CANADIAN SUPPLIERS SOLELY
26 FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PARTICIPATING IN-STATE PHARMACIES AND OTHER
27 LICENSED PROVIDERS FOR THE EXCLUSIVE PURPOSE OF DISPENSING
28 PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS TO COLORADO RESIDENTS
29 WITH VALID PRESCRIPTIONS. IN DESIGNING THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM,
30 THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL ENSURE THAT THE IMPORTATION
32 STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL INCLUDE IN THE DESIGN OF THE IMPORTATION
33 PROGRAM INFORMATION INDICATING HOW THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM
WILL:

(a) Designate an office or division of a state agency that shall become a licensed pharmaceutical wholesaler or contract with a pharmaceutical wholesaler licensed pursuant to Part 3 of Article 42.5 of Title 12;

(b) Ensure drug safety and cost savings for Colorado consumers;

(c) Meet the requirements for wholesaler licenses in accordance with Part 3 of Article 42.5 of Title 12;

(d) Select qualified Canadian pharmaceutical suppliers that are licensed and regulated under Canadian national or provincial laws;

(e) Sample imported prescription pharmaceutical products for purity, chemical composition, and potency to the extent required by federal law;

(f) Determine which prescription pharmaceutical products will be imported and ensure that all imported products are significantly less costly to Colorado consumers than the equivalent United States-licensed prescription pharmaceutical products;

(g) Ensure that imported prescription pharmaceutical products are not distributed, dispensed, or sold outside of Colorado;

(h) Ensure that participating pharmacies and other licensed providers charge individual consumers, carriers, and other payers no more than the limit established by the state department for each imported prescription pharmaceutical product.
(i) Ensure that each payment made by a carrier for reimbursement of the product component of any claim does not exceed the limit established by the state department for the imported prescription pharmaceutical product for which the payment is made;

(j) Ensure that carriers maintain up-to-date formularies and claims payment systems for their participating health plans consistent with the importation program;

(k) Ensure that participating carriers base their health plan coinsurance and patient cost-sharing on prices that are no higher than the limit established by the state department for each imported prescription pharmaceutical product;

(l) Ensure that participating carriers demonstrate to the state department how savings on imported prescription pharmaceutical products are reflected in premiums for the carriers' health plans;

(m) Set a maximum profit margin so that a wholesaler, distributor, pharmacy, or other licensed provider participating in the importation program maintains a profit margin that is no greater than the profit margin that the wholesaler, distributor, pharmacy, or other licensed provider would have earned on the equivalent nonimported drug;

(n) Exclude generic products if the importation of the products would violate United States patent laws applicable to United States-branded products;

(o) Comply with the requirements of 21 U.S.C. sec. 360eee
TO 360eee-4 PERTAINING TO THE TRACK-AND-TRACE REQUIREMENTS AS
ENACTED IN TITLE II OF THE FEDERAL "DRUG QUALITY AND SECURITY
Act", Pub.L. 113-54; AND

(p) DETERMINE A METHOD FOR COVERING THE ADMINISTRATIVE
COSTS OF THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM, WHICH METHOD MAY INCLUDE A
FEE IMPOSED ON EACH PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT SOLD
THROUGH THE PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE METHOD AS
DETERMINED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT, BUT THE STATE DEPARTMENT
SHALL NOT REQUIRE A FEE IN AN AMOUNT THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT
DETERMINES WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE CONSUMER SAVINGS.

25.5-2.5-204. Draft report - public meetings - final report -
repeal. (1) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2020, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

(a) PREPARE AND PUBLICLY RELEASE A DRAFT REPORT THAT FULLY
DESCRIPT DESCRIBES THE PROPOSED IMPORTATION PROGRAM AND ANY OTHER
IMPORTATION OPTIONS THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAY DESCRIBE; AND

(b) POST THE DRAFT REPORT ON ITS WEBSITE AND SUBMIT THE
DRAFT REPORT TO THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE, THE HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE, THE PUBLIC HEALTH CARE
AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
AND THE HEALTH AND INSURANCE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES.

(2) NOT LESS THAN FIFTEEN DAYS NOR MORE THAN FORTY-FIVE
DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE STATE DEPARTMENT POSTS THE REPORT ON
THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL HOLD
AT LEAST TWO PUBLIC MEETINGS TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT
REPORT. AT LEAST ONE MEETING MUST BE HELD IN THE DENVER
METROPOLITAN AREA, AND AT LEAST ONE MEETING MUST BE HELD IN WESTERN COLORADO.


(4) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2020.


(2) SECTIONS 25.5-2.5-206 TO 25.5-2.5-209 TAKE EFFECT IF THE SECRETARY APPROVES THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM BY DETERMINING THAT THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM COMPLIES WITH 21 U.S.C. SEC. 384. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL NOTIFY THE REVISOR OF STATUTES IN WRITING THAT THE SECRETARY HAS APPROVED THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM.
PROGRAM BY E-MAILING THE NOTICE TO
REVISOROFSTATUTES.GA@STATE.CO.US. SECTIONS 25.5-2.5-206 TO
25.5-2.5-209 TAKE EFFECT ON:
(a) THE DATE SPECIFIED IN THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTICE TO
THE REVISOR OF STATUTES THAT THE SECRETARY HAS APPROVED THE
IMPORTATION PROGRAM; OR
(b) THE DATE OF SAID NOTICE IF THE NOTICE DOES NOT SPECIFY A
DIFFERENT DATE.

25.5-2.5-206. Importation program authorized - rules.
(1) UPON APPROVAL BY THE SECRETARY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION
25.5-2.5-205, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER AN
IMPORTATION PROGRAM.
(2) THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL APPROVE A METHOD OF
FINANCING THE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM,
WHICH METHOD MAY INCLUDE IMPOSING A FEE ON EACH PRESCRIPTION
PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT SOLD THROUGH THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM
OR ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE METHOD DETERMINED BY THE STATE
DEPARTMENT TO FINANCE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS. THE STATE
DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT REQUIRE A FEE IN AN AMOUNT THAT THE STATE
DEPARTMENT DETERMINES WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE CONSUMER
SAVINGS.
(3) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL PROMULGATE RULES, IN
ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 4 OF TITLE 24 AND SECTION 25.5-1-108, AS
NECESSARY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THIS PART 2.

25.5-2.5-207. Importation program implementation. (1) To
IMPLEMENT THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL:
(a) BASED ON THE RELEVANT CRITERIA CONTAINED IN THE
IMPORTATION PROGRAM DESIGN, DEVELOP AND ISSUE A REQUEST FOR
PROPOSALS FROM ONE OR MORE PHARMACEUTICAL WHOLESALERS
LICENSED BY THE STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART
3 OF ARTICLE 42.5 OF TITLE 12. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL SELECT
THE LICENSED PHARMACEUTICAL WHOLESALERS BEST SUITED TO IMPORT
PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS UNDER THE IMPORTATION
PROGRAM. IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER TERMS REQUIRED BY THE STATE
DEPARTMENT, A WHOLESALER SHALL AGREE TO:

(I) DEVELOP A REGISTRATION SYSTEM TO ENROLL DISTRIBUTORS,
PHARMACIES AND OTHER LICENSED PROVIDERS, AND CARRIERS IN THE
IMPORTATION PROGRAM;

(II) ESTABLISH AN OUTREACH AND MARKETING PLAN TO FOSTER
PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM; AND

(III) ESTABLISH A TELEPHONE HOTLINE AND CREATE AN INTERNET
PORTAL TO ADDRESS QUESTIONS REGARDING THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM
AND TO ASSIST PHARMACIES, OTHER LICENSED PROVIDERS, AND CARRIERS
IN REGISTERING FOR THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM.

(b) REQUIRE PARTICIPATING PHARMACIES OR OTHER LICENSED
PROVIDERS TO CONTRACT DIRECTLY WITH THE PHARMACEUTICAL
WHOLESALERS SELECTED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT;

(c) REQUIRE PARTICIPATING CANADIAN SUPPLIERS TO CONTRACT
DIRECTLY WITH THE PHARMACEUTICAL WHOLESALERS SELECTED BY THE
STATE DEPARTMENT; AND

(d) ESTABLISH AND MAKE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE THE INITIAL LIST
OF IMPORTED PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS COVERED BY
THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM AND THE ACTUAL ACQUISITION COST FOR
EACH LISTED PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT. AT ANY TIME,
THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAY ADD TO OR REMOVE FROM THE IMPORTATION PROGRAM PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL UPDATE THE PUBLIC LIST OF INCLUDED PRODUCTS AT LEAST QUARTERLY.

25.5-2.5-208. Report to the general assembly.

(1) Notwithstanding section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), on or before January 1, 2022, and each January 1 thereafter, the Executive Director shall submit a report to the Joint Budget Committee, the Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate, the Public Health Care and Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives, and the Health and Insurance Committee of the House of Representatives, or any successor committees.

(2) The report described in subsection (1) of this section must include the following:

(a) The specific prescription pharmaceutical products imported through the importation program;

(b) The number of wholesalers, distributors, pharmacies and other licensed providers, and carriers that are participating in the importation program;

(c) The number of imported prescription pharmaceutical products dispensed and sold through the importation program;

(d) The estimated savings to consumers, carriers, and employers resulting from the importation program;

(e) The information collected pursuant to section 25.5-2.5-209; and

(f) Any other information the State Department deems relevant.
25.5-2.5-209. Monitoring anticompetitive behavior. The state department shall, in consultation with the attorney general, identify the potential for anticompetitive behavior in the pharmaceutical industry and other health care industries that are affected by the importation program. The state department shall include information concerning potential anticompetitive behavior in the report required by section 25.5-2.5-208.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 25.5-2.5-101 as follows:

25.5-2.5-101. Short title. The short title of this article shall be known and may be cited as PART 1 IS the "Colorado Cares Rx Act".

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 25.5-2.5-103, amend (3) as follows:

25.5-2.5-103. Lower-cost prescription drugs - information - research - reporting. (3) The state department shall report annually to the public health care and human services committees committee of the house of representatives and the health and human services committee of the senate, or any successor committees, concerning the provisions of this article PART 1.

SECTION 6. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.