

Chairwoman Lontine, and distinguished members of the Committee, my name is Beth Utton. I am from Longmont, Colorado and I am appearing today as a concerned citizen. I am testifying in support of Senate Bill 19-005, Import Prescription Drugs from Canada.

It is a sad state of affairs when, to protect the health of Colorado citizens, such a bill as SB-005 is necessary. Big Pharma has a strangle hold on the health of our country. This enables them to charge outrageous prices for the prescription drugs we need. Big Pharma purchases the active ingredients of medications in bulk lots that cost them pennies, and then they turn around and sell the medications for dollars per milligram. As a result of practices like this, since the 1970's, Big Pharma has the fattest profit margins of the entire U.S. economy.

Remember, we are not talking about optional products; we are talking about medications that are critical for the health of Coloradoans – sometimes to the point of life or death.

As a personal example, one of the medications I need to treat my rheumatoid arthritis is billed by the provider at \$4,480/month. But then the provider contracts with my insurance company to actually charge \$2,606. So, they can knock off 42% of the list price and still make more profit than any other industry. This is unconscionable. This is “playing” with our health.

SB-005 would give Colorado citizens much needed relief from the Big Pharma monopolies. There are laws on the

books by which the federal government could reign in this outrageous price gouging. But until our federal legislators are willing to stand up to Big Pharma by enforcing existing laws, intermediate steps must be taken in Colorado to protect and promote the health of our populace. SB-005 is one of those measures, a potentially significant measure.

I urge you to vote yes on SB-005. Thank you.