

# PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY

PUT THE BI-PARTISAN, BI-CAMERAL PRESCRIPTION  
DRUG TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACTION

## THE PROBLEM

Prescription drug prices are rising at unsustainable rates, leading residents across Michigan to choose between filling life-saving prescriptions, paying rent or putting dinner on the table. Over the past six years, the average price of drugs to treat diabetes, heart disease, depression, and other common conditions has more than doubled. These prices are set with little transparency but with tremendous consequence.

- Prices for the most commonly prescribed drugs for seniors have increased at more than 10 times the rate of inflation within five years.
- The average cost of prescription drugs increased nearly 60% between 2012 and 2017, while Michiganders' incomes have increased only 11%.
- Among Michigan residents ages 19-64, 32% stopped taking their medication as prescribed due to cost in 2017.

## GOVERNOR WHITMER'S PLAN

In last year's State of the State address, the Governor announced a Prescription Drug Task Force to develop policy solutions to lower prescription drug costs and create more transparency in how drugs are priced. Members of the legislature from the House and Senate – Democrats and Republicans – worked with members of the governor's cabinet to recommend legislation to ***require transparency, hold accountable those profiting from skyrocketing prices, and help make necessary medications affordable for all Michigan families.***

Policy solutions presented focus on four key principles:

- **Transparency** seeks to understand the factors that influence drug pricing
- **Affordability** lowers costs for consumers
- **Accountability** regulates certain practices that can raise prices
- **Accessibility** increases the supply of and access to prescription drugs

To lower the cost of prescription drugs for consumers, the task force recommends Michigan:

Require **transparency** reports across the supply chain. That means if a prescription drug is sold, the public should know how much it costs and who is getting paid. **License** Pharmacy Benefit Managers just like we do for other professionals who make decisions about who gets health care and how much it costs. **Penalize price increases** when there is no new clinical evidence to support it. Enact policies to better **control prices** so people can get the medication they need when they need it. Allow pharmacists to discuss more **affordable options** with consumers like generics.

Now, it's time for the legislature to pass this bipartisan legislation to lower costs for Michigan families.