Statement

PhRMA

In Opposition to Raised Bill No. 6439
Before the Environment Committee

February 25, 2013

Position: PhRMA respectfully opposes Raised Bill No. 6439, which instructs the Department of Consumer Protection, in consultation with the Division of State Police, the Connecticut Pharmacists Association, and the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, to develop and implement a program for the collection of unwanted pharmaceuticals. This program is unnecessary given the successful, voluntary drug collection program currently run by the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection in conjunction with local police departments.

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. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures.

America's pharmaceutical companies have long been advocates for consumer education on prescription drug abuse and safe disposal of prescription medication. PhRMA supports programs like the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection's (DCP) drug collection program with local police departments, America's Medicine Chest Challenge (AMCC) and the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) National Take Back Initiative, all of which provide for consumer disposal of medicines, while utilizing law enforcement to ensure that fewer unused and expired medications are available for prescription drug abuse.

PhRMA is supportive of DCP's work to install lock boxes for medicine collection at local police departments—this is a wonderful example of a program designed for and by the community. Not only does this program ensure patient safety by involving law enforcement to protect the collected medicines from diversion, but the program utilizes existing resources and appears to have no fiscal impact. In addition, our lobbyist has been working with DCP on the Governor's Prevention Program dealing with safe medicine disposal.

In addition DCP's program, several other voluntary options exist for safe medicine disposal. PhRMA has been supportive of the DEA's Drug Take Back Initiative which will next collect medicines on April 27, 2013. Also, American Medicine Chest Challenge combines necessary law enforcement oversight with educational and grassroots community advocacy. Voluntary community programs run by law enforcement are listed on their website. Partner groups include PhRMA, American College of Emergency Physicians and the Generic Pharmaceutical Association.

PhRMA believes that the drug collection program proposed in Raised Bill No. 6439 is unnecessary given voluntary programs that are already in place. In addition, PhRMA believes that Section 2 of the bill gives the Department of Consumer Protection the authority to require fees through the regulatory process—PhRMA opposes mandates requiring the biopharmaceutical industry to fund drug take back programs. For these reasons, PhRMA asks respectfully asks legislators to oppose Raised Bill No. 6439.

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