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TEVA PHARMACEUTICALS

February 10, 2015

The Honorable Joseph Crisco  
Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Room 2800  
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Robert Megna  
Insurance and Real Estate Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Room 2800  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairman Crisco and Chairman Megna:

On behalf of Teva Pharmaceuticals, I write to express our support for SB 21, An Act Concerning Health Insurance Coverage of Abuse-Deterrent Opioid Analgesics. Teva is one of the top 10 largest branded pharmaceutical companies in the United States as well as the world's largest generic pharmaceutical manufacturer. It is from this unique perspective that we offer our views on the importance of this legislation to patients, physicians and communities across Connecticut.

SB 21 supports two critical policy and public health goals – improving patient access to needed treatment options and helping to combat the terrible epidemic of prescription drug abuse.

Nearly 120 million Americans suffer from some form of chronic pain, with an estimated annual cost of \$635 billion in medical expenses and decreased work productivity.<sup>i</sup> Opioid analgesics offer these patients important treatment options and, more importantly, the opportunity to live and work in a manner of their choosing.

However, abuse of these treatments has become a national crisis. Approximately 4.5 million Americans using prescription pain medications for nonmedical purposes each year,<sup>ii</sup> contributing to more than 16,000 deaths annually.<sup>iii</sup> Prescription opioid abuse is estimated to cost the United States about \$56 billion annually due to health costs, criminal justice costs and lost productivity.<sup>iv</sup>

To address this issue, abuse deterrent formulation (ADF) opioid medications provide patients with the same pain relief as conventional opioids, but incorporate breakthrough technology designed to protect against manipulation and abuse. ADFs contain physical or chemical properties that make crushing, cutting and dissolving for injection difficult or that block the euphoric effect of the opioid when it is manipulated.<sup>v</sup> These dangerous misuses most often are the cause of overdose and death from prescription pain medications.

The FDA considers the development of ADF products a high public health priority.<sup>vi</sup> The agency views abuse deterrent formulations as fundamental to future opioid medicines and Douglas Throckmorton, the FDA Deputy Director for Regulatory Programs, recently stated, "The FDA continues to strongly encourage development of opioids that deter abuse."<sup>vii</sup> The Office of National Drug Control Policy has recommended expediting the development of abuse-deterrent formulations as a solution to this growing problem.<sup>viii</sup>

To ensure that patients can appropriately utilize the ADF medications available today, insurance benefits should promote equitable and affordable access, and provide coverage for prescriptions for abuse deterrent opioid analgesics. SB 21 achieves this goal by providing options for physicians and patients without any increase in costs, and Teva supports its passage.

SB 21 is supported by a diverse cross section of patient advocates, medical experts and policymakers, including the U.S. Pain Foundation, the Connecticut State Medical Society, the Connecticut Hospital Association, The Governor's Prevention Partnership, the Office of the Healthcare Advocate and many others.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical health and safety issue.

Sincerely,



Grant Erdel  
Senior Director, Government Affairs  
Teva Pharmaceuticals

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<sup>i</sup> Institute of Medicine Report from the Committee on Advancing Pain Research, Care, and Education: *Relieving Pain in America, A Blueprint for Transforming Prevention, Care, Education and Research*. The National Academies Press, 2011. [http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=13172&page=1](http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13172&page=1)

<sup>ii</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. September 4, 2014. The NSDUH Report: Substance Use and Mental Health Estimates from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Overview of Findings. Rockville, MD. Available at: <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/NSDUH14-0904/NSDUH14-0904.pdf>.

<sup>iii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prescription Drug Overdose in the United States: Fact Sheet. October 17, 2014. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/overdose/facts.html>.

<sup>iv</sup> Birnbaum HG, White AG, Schiller M, Waldman T, Cleveland JM, and Roland CL. Societal costs of prescription opioid abuse, dependence and misuse in the United States - *Pain Medicine* 2011; 12: 657-667

<sup>v</sup> Compiled collection of public statements

<sup>vi</sup> United States Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. Guidance for Industry. Abuse-deterrent opioids — evaluation and labeling. January 2013. Available at: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/Guidances/UCM334743.pdf>.

<sup>vii</sup> Douglas Throckmorton, Anna Edney and Caroline Chen, November 20, 2014 Bloomberg. Available at: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-11-20/purdue-pharma-wins-approval-for-abuse-deterrent-pain-pill>

<sup>viii</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy. Epidemic: Responding to America's Prescription Drug Abuse Crisis. 2011. Available at: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/policy-and-research/rx\\_abuse\\_plan.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/policy-and-research/rx_abuse_plan.pdf).