



ANTRIM COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
P.O. Box 520
Bellaire, Michigan 49615
Phone (231) 533-6353
Fax (231) 533-6935
Chairman: Edgar Boettcher, III

April 10, 2019

At the April 4, 2019 meeting of the Antrim County Board of Commissioners, the following Resolution was offered.

RESOLUTION #17-2019 By Christian Marcus, seconded by David Heeres

**Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003
Support the Process of Legislators to Commence Revising Bill**

WHEREAS, health care costs continue to rise for all Americans and, for some Americans this increase can be devastating; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is the focus of many lawmakers who portray it as an "entitlement" program that costs the Treasury too much money. Technically, the term "entitlement" is correct but it has an unfortunate connotation; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is an essential medical plan that millions of seniors and disabled individuals depend upon to stay alive. Medicare is not a gift, as the term "entitlement" suggests. Many of the beneficiaries have worked their entire adult life and paid into the system in order to receive this crucial medical plan; and

WHEREAS, due to spiraling costs largely associated with the price of prescription medications, our elected officials find themselves passing on increased costs to those who can least afford that increase, namely senior citizens and disabled individuals who are on Medicare's Part D drug program; and

WHEREAS, when congress enacted Medicare Prescription Drug Bill they enacted a law that does allow Medicare to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for drug prices the way Medicaid and the Veterans Administration does; and

WHEREAS, one economist, Dean Baker, estimates that Medicare could have saved approximately \$332 billion dollars between 2006 and 2013 (approximately \$50 billion a year) had the Department of Health and Human Services been permitted to negotiate prices of drugs with the drug companies, as federal agencies do in other programs; and

WHEREAS, rising prescription drug costs have been the primary reason for the increase in health benefit costs; and

WHEREAS, the increasing cost of prescription drugs and outrageous profits made by pharmaceutical companies is a systemic problem that significantly affects our state and our nation. It deserves non-partisan effort; and

WHEREAS, we must prevent our elected officials from balancing the budget on the backs of those who can least afford it, the elderly and disabled. Increases in premiums and drug costs are unacceptable ways to deal with the flawed Medicare Prescription Drug Bill; and

WHEREAS, we must preserve the Medicare program as it currently exists and to do so requires immediate action to cut unnecessary costs, particularly in the area of prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, we must revise the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper, drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, we cannot allow the previously approved bill to stand as adopted at the risk of having the Medicare program be the cause of a staggeringly increasing deficit which will require tax increases or cuts to the rest of the government, nor can we allow the continuance of price increases to our citizens cause many to contemplate discontinuing medically necessary drugs in order to pay their bills, heat their houses and have food on the table; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Antrim County Board of Commissioners goes on record urging our Legislators to commence the process of revising the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill of 2003 to allow negotiating lower drug prices and the importation of identical, cheaper drugs from Canada and elsewhere; and

NOW BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to our area Federal and State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, Michigan Association of Counties and the 82 Michigan Counties.

Yes – David Heeres, Joshua Watrous, Ed Boettcher, Terry VanAlstine, Brenda Ricksgers,
Dawn LaVanway, Christian Marcus;

No – Karen Bargy;

Absent – Jason Helwig.

RESOLUTION #17-2019 DECLARED ADOPTED.

ANTRIM COUNTY CLERK, BELLAIRE, MI
STATE OF MICHIGAN, COUNTY OF ANTRIM, ss
I, Sheryl A. Guy, Clerk of the County of Antrim, do
certify the above is a true and exact copy of the
original record now remaining in this office.
IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have set my hand
and official seal of the County of Antrim
this 10th day of April, 2019
Sheryl A. Guy County Clerk