



July 19, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the Orphan Product Extensions Now (OPEN) Act.

Social Security Works fights to improve the economic security of all Americans by protecting and expanding Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid and lowering drug costs. With an email list of 1.3 million engaged activists and key organizers in targeted states and districts, we fight to fundamentally restructure the pharmaceutical industry from one based on high prices and profits for the drug corporations to one based on justice.

The OPEN Act contains policies that continue to allow pharmaceutical corporations to charge patients absurd amounts of money for life-saving prescription drugs, for longer periods of time. It is estimated that this new law would cost patients and taxpayers up to \$11.6 billion over 10 years –ensuring that Americans continue to pay the highest drug prices in the world.

Former Congressman Henry Waxman, an author of the 1982 Orphan Drug Act said, “We’re seeing the Orphan Drug Act used in ways that we never anticipated when the law was adopted. In the way people use the word ‘orphan status,’ it’s almost becoming a synonym for a monopoly price.”

This piece of legislation should not pass as a standalone bill or as part of the User Fee Reauthorizations. Members of Congress should focus on legislation that reins in abuses by drug companies, and assures that Americans have affordable and accessible healthcare.

We believe lowering prescription drug prices, especially for Americans with rare diseases is a bipartisan issue. We are hopeful that you will join us in standing up for patients and rejecting yet another giveaway to billion dollar drug corporations.

Please vote “NO” on the OPEN Act. We look forward to working with you to lower prescription drug prices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Lawson".

Alex Lawson
Executive Director