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U.S. SENATOR *for* GEORGIA

The Affordable Insulin Now Act
Introduced by Senator Reverend Warnock (D-GA)

Background

Over 1 million Georgians live with diabetes – this is more than 12 percent of Georgia’s adult population.¹ Despite its prevalence, diabetes care is extraordinarily expensive. According to the American Diabetes Association, people with diabetes account for \$1 of every \$4 spent on health care in the U.S.² Additionally, costs are continuing to rise: Medicare Part D spending on insulin rose 840 percent in the decade between 2007 and 2017.³ While several states have moved to cap insulin costs, there is currently no federal limit on out-of-pocket spending for insulin.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated access to health care for people with diabetes. In the last year, 100,000 Americans died from diabetes, which is an increase of 15 percent from pre-COVID-19 levels.⁴ Additionally, 1 in 4 diabetic patients underuse or even skip insulin doses due to exorbitant costs.⁵ People with diabetes need insulin to survive and we need to do something ***now*** to improve access to this life-saving medicine.

The Affordable Insulin Now Act

This legislation would cap out-of-pocket costs of insulin products at \$35 per month for people with private health plans and Medicare Part D plans, including Medicare Advantage drug plans. For commercial plans this applies to one of each dosage form (ie. vial, pump, inhaler) of each different type of insulin (rapid-acting, short-acting, intermediate-acting, long-acting, ultra long-acting, and premixed). For Medicare plans, this applies to all covered insulin products and copays are capped at \$35 for all preferred and non-preferred products included on plan formularies.

This would begin October 1, 2022 for Medicare plans and January 1, 2023 for private health plans.

Endorsing Organizations

This legislation has been endorsed by: Protect Our Care; American Diabetes Association, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); American Federation of Teachers, Community Catalyst, Public Citizen, and Social Security Works.

¹ https://diabetes.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/ADV_2021_State_Fact_sheets_all_rev_1.27_GA.pdf

² <https://www.diabetes.org/advocacy/insulin-and-drug-affordability>

³ <https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2019/04/02/medicare-insulin-drug-prices-diabetes/>

⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/exclusive-us-diabetes-deaths-top-100000-second-straight-year-federal-panel-urges-2022-01-31/>

⁵ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshuacohen/2021/01/05/insulins-out-of-pocket-cost-burden-to-diabetic-patients-continues-to-rise-despite-reduced-net-costs-to-pbms/?sh=3d38e12340b2>