



**PRESSRELEASE
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Cempa Community Care Applauds Tennessee Legislature for Protecting 340B

The passage of SB1617/HB1398 into law would safeguard patients and community health organizations by eliminating discriminatory practices commonly employed by Pharmacy Benefit Managers.

CHATTANOOGA, TENN. (May 4, 2021)—Cempa Community Care, a Chattanooga-based community health organization, applauds the Tennessee Legislature for passing SB1617/HB1398, a bill that, if signed by Gov. Bill Lee, would protect patients and community health groups across the state by safeguarding the integrity of the Federal Government’s 340B Drug Pricing Program. This program, administered by the Health Resources & Services Administration, “enables covered entities to stretch scarce federal resources as far as possible, reaching more eligible patients and providing more comprehensive services.”

Last year, Sen. Richard Briggs (R-Knoxville) and Rep. Esther Helton (R-East Ridge) paved the way to advance Section 1 of this bill, but it was designated to summer study for further review. SB1617/HB1398, a more comprehensive reform bill, was introduced in this legislative session by Sen. Shane Reeves (R-Murfreesboro) and Rep. Esther Helton. The bill now heads to the desk of Gov. Bill Lee and will await his signature to become law.

“I commend our legislators for passing this bill so that organizations like Cempa across our great state can continue to eliminate health barriers and disparities through the 340B program,” said Cempa Community Care CEO, Shannon Stephenson. “We have fought tooth and nail against predatory Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) who’ve wanted to undercut the program to capture revenue for their own coffers. I now urge Gov. Lee to sign this bill into law so that we can continue to promote a safer and healthier Tennessee.”

The strength of this bill is built upon five key pillars. Those are:

1. Eliminating 340B discriminatory efforts potentially employed by PBMs that might undercut the financial benefits inherently delivered through the 340B program.
2. Safeguarding patient choice by (a) requiring health plans to accept coverage for prescription drugs; by (b) prohibiting a PBM from imposing coverage or benefit limitations; and by (c) ensuring that PBMs do not interfere in decisions regarding where a patient chooses to receive their drugs.
3. Protecting effective mechanisms that already allow medications to be acquired by patients at more affordable prices.



4. Cementing the fiduciary obligation PBMs have to report any entitlement benefit percentage to both the plan and covered person.
5. Ensuring heightened transparency by challenging the opaqueness within the healthcare system by freeing up data to provide accurate information at the point of care, empowering conversations and decisions about medicines a patient can afford.

For additional Cempa Community Care information, please visit www.cempa.org

For more information about the 340B program, click [this link](#)

For any media-related questions or needs, contact david@heedpr.com

About Cempa Community Care:

Leading the way for more than 30 years. Our mission is to champion healthy communities by providing affordable, compassionate, and high-quality care through advancing comprehensive support services and person-centered best practices.

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