



## NCL urges caution following HHS drug importation announcement

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Washington, DC – The National Consumers League (NCL) urges caution in light of this week's announcement on drug importation from the Department of Health and Human Services. Our primary concerns are that this proposed new rule will put the public at greater risk of counterfeit drugs while not clearly passing on any cost savings on to consumer.

NCL recently launched the Fake Rx Action Center ([https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nclnet.org%2Ffake\\_rx\\_actioncenter&data=02%7C01%7Cpatriciak%40nclnet.org%7C21f89aceaa8749e527b508d7840dea2a%7C4e1d2f3fec00459892401b9071ab6582%7C1%7C0%sddata=PMX4WTPEnBZ%2BDX3uz9PunYjulyP3hL3mz30Gie71Ss%3D&reserved=0](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nclnet.org%2Ffake_rx_actioncenter&data=02%7C01%7Cpatriciak%40nclnet.org%7C21f89aceaa8749e527b508d7840dea2a%7C4e1d2f3fec00459892401b9071ab6582%7C1%7C0%sddata=PMX4WTPEnBZ%2BDX3uz9PunYjulyP3hL3mz30Gie71Ss%3D&reserved=0)) in conjunction with our site Fraud.org, which aims to educate consumers on the risks posed by counterfeit medicines, and how to spot, avoid, and report them should consumers come across any fakes. Counterfeit medicines have already claimed lives across the country, and this proposal further endangers consumer health by undermining the security of the American pharmaceutical supply chain.

Opening the door for states, pharmacies, and distributors to obtain medications beyond U.S. borders means that consumers could more easily fall prey to bad actors from around the globe when being provided medications that have originated outside of the U.S. regulated manufacturing and distribution supply chain. As the World Health Organization has noted regarding the broader counterfeit issue, patients may end up with medications that have the wrong active ingredient, the wrong amount of active ingredient, no active ingredient, or dangerous added ingredients. While we will continue to advocate for access to affordable drugs, it is not clear from the regulations that any potential cost savings from obtaining medications outside the U.S. borders will be passed on to individual consumers. The goal of lowering prices for consumers without a clear assurance of out of pocket cost savings in these regulations is not worth increasing the risk of harm to consumers by exposing them to medications that may not meet the clear standards of U.S. law.

Our organization has put consumers first for more than 100 years. It is our belief that there are safer and more effective ways to provide access to necessary prescription medications than to expose Americans to potentially deadly counterfeits originating outside the United States.

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### About the National Consumers League (NCL)

The National Consumers League, founded in 1899, is America's pioneer consumer organization. Our mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information, visit [www.nclnet.org](http://www.nclnet.org).

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