

Ohio Issue 2 – Drug Price Relief Act (2017)

What would Ohio Issue 2 do?

Issue 2 would require the state and state agencies, including the Ohio Department of Medicaid, to pay the same or lower prices for prescription drugs as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) – which currently negotiates drug prices that are 20-24 percent less than other agencies.

Issue 2 would also forbid state agencies or state-funded programs (ex. Medicaid, state prisons) from entering into a purchase agreement with drug manufacturers unless the net cost of the drug is the same or less than the VA pays.

Further, it gives the sponsors of the ballot initiative the right to intervene, at taxpayer expense, in any legal challenges filed against the initiative after the election.

Who SUPPORTS Ohio Issue 2?

Ohio Taxpayers for Lower Drug Prices is leading the campaign in support of the initiative. The Aids Healthcare Foundation is responsible for most of the campaign funding.

Supporters include:

- AIDS Healthcare Foundation
- AIDS Healthcare Foundation of Cleveland and Columbus
- Our Revolution
- Ohio Dental Association of Minority Dentists
- U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (Vermont)
- Ohio Rep. Bill Patmon (D-9)
- Various Cincinnati City Council Members
- Michael Stinziano, Columbus City Council
- Former Ohio Rep. Wayne Coates
- Ohio Academy of Family Physicians
- National Nurses United
- Cleveland Chapter NAACP
- Former Ohio Senator Nina Turner, President of Our Revolution
- Ohio Senator Cecil Thomas (D-9)
- Mayor John Cranley of Cincinnati
- Various Cleveland City Council Members
- Michael Cole, Columbus City Schools School Board
- Former Ohio Senator Shirley Smith

Why Support Ohio Issue 2? (According to the Ohio Taxpayers for Lower Drug Prices Campaign)

- Issue 2 changes Ohio law to ensure we pay the lowest known price for medicine. Ohioans would save \$400 million, which would help fund schools, police departments, and cut taxes. Instead, that money goes to drug companies.
- Drug companies keep driving up prices on medicines needed to treat everything from asthma to cancer until they become too expensive for you to afford or insurance to cover.

Life-saving medicine for children with allergies has skyrocketed from \$80 to over \$600 – just one of many examples.

- Drug companies fueled their profits by lying about opioids. They paid doctors over \$46 million to get them to overprescribe opioid pain medication, getting Ohioans hooked, killing kids, and destroying our communities. These are the same drug companies spending millions of dollars to get you to vote against this issue – all so they can protect their profits.
- Politicians make promises they never keep. They say they'll lower the cost of healthcare, but then the lobbyists and political donations come, and our costs don't go down - they only go up.

Who OPPOSES Ohio Issue 2?

Ohioans Against the Deceptive Rx Ballot Issue Committee is leading the campaign in opposition of the initiative.

Opponents include:

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| • Ohio Nurses Association | • National Alliance on Mental Illness in Ohio |
| • Ohio Hospital Association | • Ohio State Medical Association |
| • Ohio Osteopathic Association | • American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Chapter |
| • American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Ohio | • Ohio Pharmacists Association |
| • Ohio Foot and Ankle Medical Association | • Ohio Hematology Oncology Society |
| • Ohio Ophthalmological Society | • Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association |
| • Equitas Health | • Ohio Society for Health System Pharmacists |
| • National Alliance for Mental Illness in Ohio | • Mental Health America of Franklin County |
| • The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Service Providers | • Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health and Authorities |
| • Prevention Action Alliance | • National Community Pharmacists Association |
| • PhRMA | • Ohio Sickle Cell and Health Association |
| • Ohio Affiliate of Prevent Blindness | • The Academy of Medicine of Cleveland and Northern Ohio |
| • The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Columbus | • Columbus Branch NAACP |
| • Public Employees Retirees, Inc. | • Ohio Chamber of Commerce |
| • Ashland, Canton, Dayton and Toledo Regional Chambers of Commerce | • Ohio Manufacturers' Association |
| • ACT Ohio – Ohio's Affiliated Construction Trades | • Ohio Grocers Association |

- The Buckeye Institute
- Toledo Area Small Business Association
- The American Legion, Ohio
- Ohio State Association of County Veterans Services Officers and Commissioners
- Jewish Wars Veterans, Ohio
- Military Order of the Purple Heart, Ohio
- Korean War Veterans, Ohio
- Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
- The Retired Enlisted Association
- Ohio Fire Chiefs Association
- Ohio State Grange
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, Ohio
- Department of Ohio Marine Corps League
- Italian American War Veterans, Ohio Post 34
- Catholic War Veterans, Ohio
- Military Officers Association of America, Ohio
- Ohio National Guard Association
- Concerned Veterans of America
- BioOhio
- Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Why Oppose Ohio Issue 2? (According to Ohioans Against the Deceptive Rx Ballot Issue Committee)

COSTLY

- Ohio doctors, nurses, pharmacists and hospitals oppose the ballot issue because it could increase costs for the 7 million Ohioans—nearly two-thirds of our population— who are left out, including those with private insurance and those who rely on Medicare or otherwise do not obtain medications through state programs.
- Military veterans could also pay more for prescription drugs.
- Three Ohio Medicaid directors who served in both Democratic and Republican administrations and a state budget director warn the ballot issue could reduce patient access to medications.
- An unprecedented provision gives ballot sponsors a blank check by allowing them to intervene in any legal challenges and requires taxpayers to pay their attorney fees, win or lose.

DECEPTIVE

- An Ohio budget director says the claim that the ballot issue would save \$400 million annually is “simply false” and based on an assumption that Ohio does not already receive substantial prescription discounts. In fact, Ohio’s Medicaid program receives federally mandated and voluntarily negotiated discounts that bring its costs down to levels similar to those of the VA.
- Ohio Medicaid directors warn the ballot issue could invalidate existing drug discount agreements—potentially increasing the state’s prescription costs by tens of millions of dollars annually.

UNWORKABLE

- Health care experts say requiring Ohio to purchase drugs at the lowest price paid by the VA would be impossible to implement because, by law, the VA does not disclose this price.
- The ballot issue contains no language guiding implementation—and was proposed by a controversial California health care CEO without consulting any Ohio officials tasked with implementation—which will lead to bureaucratic in-fighting, delays, lawsuits and higher costs for taxpayers.

Is Issue 2 the same as California Proposition 61 (November 2016)?

According to articles by the *Columbus Dispatch* and the *Harvard Law Blog*, Issue 2 and California Proposition 61 are similar. Proposition 61 was designed to restrict the amount that any state agency could pay for drugs, tying it to the price paid by the VA. The main difference in the proposals is that California Proposition 61 would have exempted Medicaid managed care plans from the new drug price regulations. Ohio Issue 2 does not. Voters in California rejected the measure, 53% to 47%.