

**ASOP Global Statement on President Trump's Executive Order
on Accelerated Timeline for State Drug Importation Proposals**

WASHINGTON – July 27, 2020 – In response to the Executive Order President Trump signed Friday to set price controls on drugs imported from other countries into the U.S., the [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global), issued the following statement:

Though ASOP Global supports continued efforts to address issues associated with patient access and affordability, Friday's Executive Order raises significant problems within a complex, global supply chain and does little to resolve the issues at hand. It remains unclear how states and the federal government would be able to safely, effectively and affordably implement a prescription drug wholesale - or personal - importation plan as the policy continues to overlook the significant risks to patient safety associated with sourcing drugs from outside the highly regulated U.S. supply chain.

ASOP Global is not alone in its concerns. For decades, HHS Secretaries and FDA Commissioners on both sides of the aisle have opposed importation proposals – including President Trump's former [FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb – due to concerns around safety, implementation, and oversight](#). Numerous [patient advocacy organizations](#) have all voiced serious concern over the safety and operability of drug importation programs. The [Congressional Budget Office](#) has determined that any potential savings would be nominal at best. And perhaps most damning, past importation efforts in states like Illinois, Maine, Minnesota and Vermont have all failed.

Setting aside the tremendous domestic opposition to these proposals, drug importation from Canada is largely opposed by Canadian stakeholders themselves. Fearing drug shortages and higher prices of their own, Canadian government officials, [patient-advocacy groups and healthcare professionals](#) are fiercely against importation plans that pose a [significant risk](#) to their limited national drug supply. Far from granting the U.S. "most favored nation" price discounts, Health Canada may – as it has in the past – outright prevent its wholesalers from exporting approved prescription drugs in order to protect the Canadian drug supply, which is already experiencing shortages on over 2,000 medicines.

While the timeline for an importation protocol to be approved and implemented could be months, if not years away, today's announcement may put patients at an immediate, heightened risk. As new threats to the global pharmaceutical supply chain due to COVID-19 exasperate drug shortages around the world, U.S. drug importation proposals could drive Americans to unknowingly access dangerous – even deadly - counterfeit, substandard or unapproved medicines online. Coupled with the increased prevalence of fraud and misinformation online, promoting foreign sourced prescription drugs creates an immediate risk to an already vulnerable U.S. population.

Importation remains an implausible solution to America's domestic drug pricing crisis. American health experts and advocates oppose it. Canada simply does not have a sufficient quantity of drugs to fill America's needs. And the internet is awash with illegal online drug sellers posing as legitimate "Canadian" pharmacies and claiming to be selling safe, FDA- or Health Canada-approved medicines. ASOP Global welcomes the opportunity to provide the Administration with data and insights showing why importation is not the solution and offer alternatives for helping Americans stay safe and save money when looking for medicines online.

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ABOUT ASOP GLOBAL

The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. with activities in U.S., Canada, Europe, Latin America and Asia, is dedicated to protecting consumers around the world, ensuring safe access to medications, and combating illegal online drug sellers.