

S 920

Affordable and Safe Prescription Drug Importation Act

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Health

Introduced: Mar 23, 2021

Current Status: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security

Latest Action: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security. Hearings held. (Mar 23, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/920>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]

Party: Independent • **State:** VT • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (21 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|
| Sen. Baldwin, Tammy [D-WI] | D · WI | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT] | D · CT | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ] | D · NJ | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH] | D · OH | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA] | D · PA | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY] | D · NY | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Heinrich, Martin [D-NM] | D · NM | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME] | I · ME | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN] | D · MN | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT] | D · VT | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Manchin, Joe, III [D-WV] | D · WV | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR] | D · OR | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Padilla, Alex [D-CA] | D · CA | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Reed, Jack [D-RI] | D · RI | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH] | D · NH | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Smith, Tina [D-MN] | D · MN | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Stabenow, Debbie [D-MI] | D · MI | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD] | D · MD | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA] | D · MA | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Whitehouse, Sheldon [D-RI] | D · RI | | Mar 23, 2021 |
| Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR] | D · OR | | Mar 23, 2021 |

Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|--|---------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee | Senate | Hearings By (subcommittee) | Mar 23, 2021 |

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Health

Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| 117 S 1898 | Related bill | May 27, 2021: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. |
| 117 HR 2181 | Identical bill | Mar 24, 2021: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health. |

Summary (as of Mar 23, 2021)

Affordable and Safe Prescription Drug Importation Act

This bill allows expanded importation of eligible prescription drugs and addresses related issues.

Current law allows the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to authorize the importation of certain eligible prescription drugs from Canada if HHS certifies to Congress that doing so would pose no additional risk to public health and safety and would result in significant cost savings for consumers. The bill removes this certification requirement and requires HHS to issue regulations that permit the importation of qualifying prescription drugs from Canada. After a certain amount of time, HHS may authorize importation from certain other countries if it determines that importation from Canada has resulted in cost savings for consumers and increased access to safe medication.

The bill also expands the types of prescription drugs eligible for importation to include, for example, biologics such as insulin.

Furthermore, the bill allows individuals to use an eligible licensed foreign pharmacy to fill a U.S.-issued prescription for a qualifying drug for personal use. Currently, an individual seeking to import a prescription drug generally must acquire a waiver from HHS.

The bill imposes various requirements related to certification of foreign sellers, labeling of imported drugs, and supply chain security.

The bill also (1) prohibits certain acts that discriminate against foreign sellers, such as charging higher prices to foreign sellers than to other sellers in the same country; and (2) imposes criminal penalties for online websites that sell counterfeit drugs or dispense drugs without a required prescription.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 23, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 23, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.
- **Mar 23, 2021:** Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security. Hearings held.