# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 8, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Committee on Health,
Education, Labor & Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

Biomedical innovation is a cornerstone of our healthcare system. The development of innovative new cures and treatments extends life and improves health, and we thank you for your leadership in helping to advance such efforts. For these pioneering new discoveries to improve health outcomes, however, patients need access. We are concerned by reports that the rising costs of prescription drugs are placing treatments out of reach for too many patients and driving up spending across our entire health care system. For that reason, we request that the Committee hold hearings on rising drug spending and the impact on overall health spending.

We consistently hear from our constituents concerns related to rising costs of drugs. Increased drug spending can have a significant impact on federal, state, and family budgets.

Because of the personal and economic impact of increased drug spending, the HELP Committee should explore the important issues surrounding drug spending. Going forward, we need a comprehensive approach to identify trends related to growing drug spending, bring down overall health care costs, improve and reward quality, and promote innovation. The Committee will be well served to hear from expert witnesses in hopes of developing bipartisan policies within the jurisdiction of the HELP committee that will help address this growing problem.

Thank you again for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to focus on this urgent health and economic concern.

Sincerely,

Al Franken

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Al Franken
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Susan Collins
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator