



## **WEST HEALTH INSTITUTE SUPPORTS HOUSE SPEAKER PELOSI'S DRUG PRICING PLAN**

WASHINGTON, DC – September 19, 2019 – *House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) today released a plan to allow government negotiation of prescription drugs that account for the greatest total cost to Medicare and the entire U.S. health system and that lack competition. The following is a statement from [Shelley Lyford](#), president and CEO of the [Gary and Mary West Health Institute](#):*

We commend Speaker Pelosi and House Democrats for introducing long overdue legislation that takes a meaningful step to ensure Americans, like citizens of other developed countries, have affordable access to life saving prescription drugs. Prescription drugs have been priced too high for too long and lowering drug prices would provide the most immediate opportunity for relief of exorbitant healthcare prices overall.

West Health has long supported measures to empower Medicare to directly negotiate drug pricing, which it is currently prohibited from doing, as a groundbreaking lever to force prescription drug manufacturers to bring down prices and lower patients' costs. Prioritizing Medicare negotiation for drug prices as the foundation to lower prescription drug costs simply makes sense.

While drug company CEO salaries and profits soar, a recent [West Health-Gallup poll](#) suggests a very different experience for the American public: 48 million people can't afford their prescriptions, 1 in 4 forgo needed care due to costs, and Americans collectively borrowed an estimated \$88 million in the past year to cover healthcare costs. It's time we demand bipartisan action on smart policies that can truly lower costs, and Speaker Pelosi's plan to allow Medicare negotiation is a great start.

### **About West Health**

Solely funded by philanthropists Gary and Mary West, [West Health](#) is a family of nonprofit and nonpartisan organizations including the [Gary and Mary West Foundation](#) and [Gary and Mary West Health Institute](#) in San Diego, and the [Gary and Mary West Health Policy Center](#) in Washington, D.C. West Health is dedicated to lowering

healthcare costs to enable seniors to [successfully age](#) in place with access to high-quality, affordable health and support services that preserve and protect their dignity, quality of life and independence. Learn more at [westhealth.org](http://westhealth.org) and [healthcostcrisis.org](http://healthcostcrisis.org), and follow [@westhealth](#).

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