

Senators push for quicker generic drug access

July 23 2013, by Henry C. Jackson

(AP)—Two senators want to do away with the agreements that pharmaceutical companies make with one another to keep lower-priced generic copies of brand-name drugs off the market.

Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Republican Charles Grassley of Iowa say such "pay-for-delay" deals force consumers to pay higher prices for critical drugs. Their bill would make such agreements illegal unless the companies can prove in court that they aren't anti-competitive.

Grassley says Congress, in his words, "should be doing all we can to see that the American consumer has access to lower-priced drugs as soon as possible."

Representatives of the [pharmaceutical industry](#) tell a Senate antitrust subcommittee chaired by Klobuchar that the agreements sometimes shorten the time for [generic drugs](#) to reach the market, particularly in patent disputes.

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