

States ask Congress to intervene on drug prices

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Medicaid chiefs from red and blue states are urging Congress to stem the cost of revolutionary new drugs for hepatitis C, cancer, and other diseases.

In a letter Tuesday to key congressional committees, the National Association of Medicaid Directors said lawmakers should consider everything from outright price controls on manufacturers to federal help for states trying to pay for the new medications.

The bipartisan group did not endorse any particular course of action.

Concern about drug prices has been stoked by Sovaldi, a \$1,000-per-pill cure for hepatitis C, now with an even more expensive successor.

The pharmaceutical industry has successfully beaten back previous efforts on Capitol Hill to curb its pricing power, but now the debate seems to be starting again. Medicaid is the federal-state health program for the poor.

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