



Chairman's Opening Remarks November 19th Hearing

"The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging will now come to order.

This hearing is about something we've all used, and every American relies on – access to safe, affordable, and high-quality medicines.

Generic drugs are lifeline for millions of Americans and a market miracle that allows for accessible treatments. That is why it's so important we have transparency into their supply chains and full confidence in their production.

As we know from the FDA's own people, they have allowed importation of drugs from facilities that are non-compliant simply because of the potential for shortage but we should be making these drugs here in the first place.

Witnesses in our past hearings have highlighted the ways that we can bring back domestic production in an affordable, market driven way.

Today, nearly 80 percent of the active ingredients in our prescription drugs come from foreign sources. That means we depend on our adversaries for the very medicines our families and seniors need to survive.

Consumers, pharmacies, and big buyers like hospitals don't even know the full extent of where those drugs are made or what's happening inside the plants that make them because we don't have country of origin labeling requirements.

We've seen the results of that dependence: contaminated drugs, dangerous recalls, and shortages that force doctors and patients to ration care.

It is UNACCEPTABLE that the most advanced country in the world can't ensure a steady, safe supply of basic medicines for its own citizens.

The solution for this is simple – we must make drugs in America again.

The health and safety of Americans is too important to leave in the hands of other nations, especially our adversaries like China.

When we manufacture here at home, we can control quality, strengthen oversight, and protect patients. We also get the benefit of creating good-paying jobs and growing our economy.

Today's witnesses are proof that American manufacturing works. These companies show that it's possible and profitable to make safe, affordable medicines in the U.S.

However, they also face challenges that Washington has helped create.

Red tape at the FDA delays approvals and drives up cost – something I and many of my colleagues are interested in fixing.

Current procurement rules for government agencies – large purchasers of generic drugs – reward the cheapest overseas bidder rather than the safest or most reliable product to the detriment of American manufacturing. The difference often being negligible.

And foreign governments manipulate their pricing to undercut American manufacturers.

The result? A broken system that leaves our patients vulnerable and our businesses at a disadvantage.

The federal government should lead by example. The VA, Medicare, and our military health programs should prioritize American-made medicines.

Taxpayer dollars should support our American workers, not fund companies in China with ties to forced labor and that don't meet our safety standards.

This isn't just an economic issue; it's a matter of national security.

Americans should never have to wonder whether their blood pressure medication, insulin, or antibiotic was made safely.

We can do better. We must do better.

Together, we can build a stronger, safer, more self-reliant medicine system here in America."

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