The Prescription Drug Pricing Dashboard Act (S. 1773)
Led by Senators Casey (D-PA) and Collins (R-ME)

Why do we need the Prescription Drug Pricing Dashboard Act?

The Drug Spending Dashboards (Dashboards) published by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) are interactive, web-based tools that provide spending information for prescription drugs in the Medicare Part B and D programs as well as Medicaid.[1] In 2015, the Obama Administration created the first Dashboard to expose the financial burden of select prescription drugs for seniors and people with disabilities and to highlight high costs to the Medicare program. At the time, these interactive Dashboards provided information on overall spending as well as average change in spending for the top 80 most expensive prescription drugs under Medicare Parts B and D.

As part of ongoing efforts to increase transparency, in 2016, CMS updated the Dashboards to include information on Medicaid spending, with 70 of the highest-cost and highest-volume medications included. Further, in May 2018, the Trump Administration updated the information on the Dashboards and added upgrades to display year-over-year changes in how much Medicare and Medicaid spend on individual prescription drugs and expanded both databases to include a majority (thousands) of drugs used.

An analysis by the Kaiser Family Foundation shows that prescription drug spending is highly concentrated among a relatively small share of covered drugs. Further, prescription drug spending is growing and represents an increasing share of the U.S. health care economy, crossing the $1 trillion threshold in 2015. Nearly a quarter of Americans find it difficult to afford their prescription medications, making it essential to promote transparency and ensure that consumers have the ability to see and understand medication costs.

What would the Prescription Drug Pricing Dashboard Act do?

The Prescription Drug Pricing Dashboard Act will:
- Codify the existing Dashboards and require they are updated at least annually to include information on brand name drugs, and, if applicable, the generic drug or biological offered under Medicare Part B, Part D and Medicaid, including consumer-friendly information on uses and clinical indication.
- Publish information on spending for drugs under Medicare Part B, Part D and Medicaid, including average total, percent change and annual growth rate in spending and highlight the 15 drugs in each program with the highest total spending. This information is to include the total number of people receiving the drug or biological as well as average spending per beneficiary.
- Require the Medicare Part B and Part D Dashboards to include information about out-of-pocket costs for individuals enrolled in each program.
- Ensure that the full underlying data is readily available in a downloadable format.

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[1] Information on Part B drugs excludes Medicare Advantage.