

Secretary Xavier Becerra  
Acting Director Lyric Johnson  
NIH Office of Science Policy  
6705 Rockledge Drive, Suite 750  
Bethesda, MD 20892

January 26, 2022

Dear Secretary Becerra and Acting Director Johnson:

I am writing to express my strong support for the march-in request currently before the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regarding the pricing for the prostate cancer medicine Xtandi.

By supporting the march-in request and allowing the generic manufacturing of Xtandi you will reduce a significant and unjust financial burden on prostate cancer patients like me. In the summer of 2020 I was briefly placed on Xtandi. Filling one prescription for the drug cost \$625.70, out of pocket.

As retired small business owners, my wife and I watch our expenses. While we have been fortunate compared to so many, shelling out over \$600 every time I need a prescription filled does not go unnoticed in our monthly budget. At a time when our sole focus should be on health, and spending time together as a family, drugs like Xtandi force families to focus on - and worry about - price tags.


As horrified as I was by the cost of Xtandi, I was even more upset when I learned about the disparities between what American patients pay for this drug and what patients in countries like Japan, Canada, and France pay. I'm glad that patients around the world have affordable access to the health care they need - that is a right every human should enjoy. But why are Americans suffering under the high costs of prescription drugs like Xtandi? More directly, why is my government allowing Americans to suffer under the high costs of prescription drugs like Xtandi when the option to exercise march-in rights and allow generic manufacturing exists?

I have deep gratitude for the scientists behind the pharmaceutical innovations that have been crucial to my seventeen year battle with prostate cancer. But cancer patients cannot pay for their life-saving medicines in gratitude.

Please allow American prostate cancer patients the same right to access affordable care as patients around the world. Please allow us to focus on our health and our families rather than on dollars and cents. Please put people over profits. Please support the march-in request regarding Xtandi.

I thank you for your consideration and for your service. I am available for any questions at the address below or at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

  
Robert H. Mermell  
[REDACTED]