

# The PUTTbulletin



## Meeting the Moment: The Time for Bold Action is NOW

Dear PUTT Members and Friends,

There will never be a better opportunity to swing out big for aggressive, meaningful PBM reform. The moment is now. Let's do this together.

There are several starting points, all critical to the kind of big, bold, "beautiful" PBM reform we're all looking for:

The newly-strengthened **Pharmacists Fight Back Act** and **Patients Before Monopolies Act** are on the brink of being reintroduced. Are you a member of PUTT's "PFB" Working Group? If not, you should be. [Contact us here to join.](#)

The **American Economic Liberties Project** will hold its [2025 Anti-Monopoly Summit](#) featuring many lawmakers critical to the success of our own efforts to stop anticompetitive PBM practices. Consider attending. Several PUTT board members will be there - let's meet up! Then let's walk over to Capitol Hill and call on some legislators who would love to meet you and hear your story.

NCPA's [Annual Convention in New Orleans](#) is **October 18-21**. [Have you registered?](#) This is how important NCPA's annual meeting is: we at PUTT never miss it. We look to Anne Cassidy, Ronna Hauser and the very capable Government Affairs team to provide the latest updates on regulation and legislation. With so many new programs in discussion and/or starting (like the first 10 Medicare price-negotiated drugs in 2026), discussion will be centered on regulation and implementation, the importance of which cannot be understated. PUTT and NCPA do not always see eye-to-eye on the issues but never doubt we respect and appreciate NCPA staff and leadership for their efforts on all of our behalf.

PUTT's Annual Summit, scheduled for **September 24th**, will dig into the mechanics to effect seemingly "impossible" PBM reforms. Scroll down for more information, because this year's Summit will be HUGE.

Remember, successful reform requires:

- **Meaningful legislative advocacy** that addresses pharmacy's true needs: reimbursement that covers costs; enforceable financial and criminal penalties that end the cavalier lawbreaking; decentralizing healthcare and diluting market concentration

- **Professional unity** among pharmacies, pharmacy advocates and pharmacy champions
- **Strategy and action** that reaches beyond the traditional thinking and norms. Understand there are certain norms, yes, but don't let those norms distract us from the goal of achieving lasting reforms that protect our profession and our patients

**Bold leadership and participation from every pharmacist and pharmacy advocate** who refuses to accept limitations on our potential.

### Now Let's Talk About PUTT's Annual Summit on September 24th

This year's Summit focuses on taking Big, Bold, "Beautiful" action toward meaningful PBM reform. We're specifically aiming at the PBM practices so deeply ingrained that conventional thinking says they're impossible to counteract. So this year we'll take a deeper dive into:

- The year's most controversial new law, Arkansas Act 624 (prohibiting PBMs from operating their owned/affiliated pharmacies while also operating as a PBM)
- The new, strengthened *Pharmacists Fight Back Act* and *Patients Before Monopolies Act*. What's changed, what's required to pass them into law
- What the data tells us: the Audit Tricare Campaign and the Virginia Medicaid Report, which uncovered billions in government overspending
- The newest panel of State Legislator Pharmacy Champions - what's changed; what they're hearing from the opposition; their outlook on 2026

**The question isn't whether change will come. The question is whether we'll lead or be led by that change.**

Whether it's one event this fall or all of them, we invite you to take a bold step forward and get involved (especially the PUTT Summit).

Let's meet this moment together and help write pharmacy's next chapter - the one in which we take back our profession; resume providing patient-centered care; and proudly stand with and for our communities as healthcare centers of excellence.

The time is now. Register for the PUTT Summit today. The future of the pharmacy profession is counting on you.

PUTT is the only 501c3 nonprofit 100% dedicated to fighting against PBM anticompetitive business practices on behalf of pharmacies and their patients.

Donate Today at [TruthRx.org/donate](https://truthrx.org/donate)

## Pharmacy Business



### ESI MAC Appeals

Our partners at LIPA are hearing about ongoing issues with Express Scripts' handling of MAC appeals. In several cases, pharmacies were granted price increases through the appeal process, but the adjustments were not applied as expected. Instead of reimbursing the pharmacy appropriately, the increases were, in some instances, applied to the patient's copay leaving the pharmacy unable to recover the cost of dispensing the medication weeks after it had already been provided. In other cases, pharmacies reported that claims approved just days earlier were suddenly denied upon resubmission with Express Scripts citing new prior authorization requirements. In some cases, ESI acknowledged that the original claim had been processed due to a "glitch," leaving the pharmacy without a path to proper payment despite following appeal instructions.

### Optum Reversals

Over the last few weeks, LIPA has also seen reports from a number of Louisiana pharmacies that Optum has unexpectedly reversed and rebilled claims, often at significantly lower reimbursement rates than originally paid. These adjustments appear to affect prescriptions dispensed between mid-June and early July 2025, though some pharmacies have also seen clawbacks for more recent submittals. In many cases, claims that initially showed a profit were later reversed and reprocessed to reflect just a fraction of the original payment, leading to a negative reimbursement. The actions have been taken without prior notice, creating significant operational and financial disruption.

Both of these problems have also been noted by PUTT members & supporters in other states. If your pharmacy has experienced these issues with ESI, Optum, or another PBM, please securely contact us at [evidence@truthrx.org](mailto:evidence@truthrx.org).

## Listening In



### LISTEN NOW

Discover how Louisiana legislators and healthcare advocates triumphed over corporate opposition to enact groundbreaking PBM reform with HB 264. Join host Lauren Young as she welcomes Louisiana State Representative Michael Eholis and Louisiana Independent Pharmacies Association Director of Government Affairs Matthew Cross to discuss the collaborative fight that made this victory possible, and what it means for the future of fair pharmacy practices and patient care.

### Welcome Back to PBM on the Rocks!

Join Lord Dr. Jeremy and the PUTT Cocktail crew with special guests John Farina (AHF) & Kris Rhea (Pharmacy Marketplace). From shedding light on the critical role of independent pharmacies in our healthcare system - including the challenges they face with pharmacy MAC appeals, and the innovative solutions being developed to help them recover lost funds - to discussing how middlemen are draining resources from the American economy without delivering value - this episode is a must-listen for anyone passionate about reform, independent pharmacy advocacy, and the fight against PBM overreach in our healthcare system.



### LISTEN NOW

Scan the QR to catch all episodes of the PUTTcast



Scan the QR to catch all episodes of PBM on the Rocks



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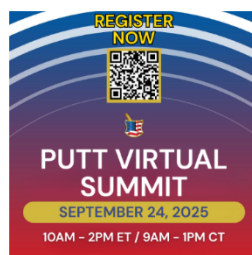
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## Around PUTT

It's Almost Time for PUTT's Annual Summit!



This year's virtual event will feature keynote speaker John Vinson, CEO of the Arkansas Pharmacy Association, federal legislative updates from APC's Vice President of Healthcare Policy & General Counsel Greg Reybold, as always, our state legislator panel of champions, PLUS a few more timely surprises we'll fill you in on soon. 🍷

Registration is Required so Reserve Your Spot Now!

### 2025 PUTT Virtual Summit

When: Wednesday, September 24th

Time: 10 AM - 2 PM ET / 7 AM - 11 AM PT

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TODAY](#)

## Supporter Voices



### The Story of Tennessee's MAC Law - and Why It Matters Now

At the heart of Tennessee's PBM reforms is the Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) law. A MAC is the reimbursement cap a Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) sets for a generic or multi-source medication. Tennessee law requires PBMs to ensure that any drug on a MAC list is generally available from national or regional wholesalers at or below the reimbursement price. Pharmacies must also be reimbursed no less than their actual acquisition cost (AAC) of the medication — the true price they pay to purchase it — plus a professional dispensing fee. If a PBM sets a reimbursement that falls below AAC or fails to include the proper dispensing fee, the pharmacy is entitled to file an appeal.

Tennessee began this work in 2014 with early MAC regulations, but it was Public Chapter 569 (2021) and Public Chapter 1070 (2022) that transformed PBM oversight into enforceable law... [Continue Reading](#)

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## Digging Deep

The Spreadsheet Killing Pharmacy Reform: How the CBO Became PBMs' Sidekick



If you think the biggest obstacle to fixing PBMs is their billion-dollar lobby, bless your heart, because you're only half right. The other half? A government spreadsheet in D.C. quietly strangling real reform before it ever has a chance.

Meet the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). The unelected, unaccountable scorekeeper that can take a bipartisan, common-sense bill and file it under "too expensive" with the click of a keystroke. Officially, their estimates are "advisory." Unofficially, if CBO says a bill adds to the deficit (even by lunch money) Congress drops it like a bad habit.

### Rebate Theater

The CBO scoring process is like an illusion show - and the headliners are PBMs and a glib scribe... [Continue Reading](#)

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## PUTT in the News



- [Bring your own stamp or what's so special about Specialty Pharmacy?](#) | Alabama Healthcare Examiner (PUTT member, Trent McLemore)
- [Lubbock pharmacist raises concerns over insurance steering, prescription costs](#) | KLBK CBS News station (PUTT board member, Chris Hobart)
- [Rural residents and veterans need a fair system. PBMs hinder that](#) | [nola.com](#) (PUTT Executive Director, Monique Whitney) read this article for free on our website [here](#)

**Editor's Note:** We love featuring PUTT members in our newsletters! Are you a member of PUTT that's been interviewed by a local or national news organization? Send us your coverage links at [info@truthrx.org](mailto:info@truthrx.org).

## News You Can SHARE

[DOJ probing UnitedHealth's Optum Rx, alongside Medicare practices](#) | Modern Healthcare (gift link)

[12 pharmacy benefit managers found in violation of reimbursement rule](#) | Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette

[CVS unit must pay \\$290 million in drug whistleblower lawsuit, judge rules](#) | Reuters

[UnitedHealth's Campaign to Quiet Critics](#) | The New York Times (gift link)

[Don't Let Middlemen Off the Hook in the Drug Pricing Debate](#) | DC Journal

[Goliath vs. David: Optum Rx invokes open meetings law to fight Kentucky counties on opioid suits](#) | Kentucky Lantern

[Trump's executive order named the scoundrels in our drug supply chain. Why is CMS giving them more control?](#) | Urbana Daily Citizen

[Medicare Advantage star ratings lawsuit losses pile up](#) | Modern Healthcare (gift link)