



PHARMACISTS UNITED FOR  
TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY  
TRUTHRX.ORG

CONTACT: Monique Whitney, APR  
Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency  
Monique@TruthRx.org  
m. (505) 480-4150

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 4, 2018

### PUTT CALLS OUT ILLINOIS GOVERNOR BRUCE RAUNER FOR MISINFORMED STATEMENTS ABOUT INDEPENDENT PHARMACY DURING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency (PUTT) is calling on Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner to reconsider his statement earlier this week at an event commemorating National Small Business Week during which he said “some businesses can be competitive in costs, and some businesses can't” in response to a question about complaints by independent pharmacies over the state's recently-rolled out managed care “reboot”.

The Governor’s tone-deaf statement during a week set aside to honor and acknowledge the role of the nation’s small businesses in powering the American economy suggests an increasingly troubling trend -- evidence that **the U.S. healthcare system pharmacy benefits management industry is so complex and opaque that not even those charged with oversight of this \$300 billion dollar industry understand how it works.**

Gov. Rauner’s lack of understanding is evident in his misinformed view that independent pharmacies “can’t compete” and, in the absence of a Medicaid Managed Care model, would need to be “subsidized”. While doubling down on his staunch support of HealthChoice Illinois, Gov. Rauner regurgitated standard PBM rhetoric about drug cost savings and their "essential role" in managing Medicaid program costs for Illinois - a state already in dire financial straits.

Gov. Rauner says he wants high quality healthcare AND competition, stressing the need for VALUE in the state's Medicaid program. PUTT asks Gov. Rauner to consider the following:

- **Independent pharmacies are favored by consumers for quality of care.** Per *Consumer Reports*, independent pharmacies scored highest in every area of customer service, with some 90 percent of patients rating their pharmacy as “Excellent” or “Very Good” in speed and accuracy, courtesy and helpfulness, and pharmacists' knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Pharmacy Buying Guide, *Consumer Reports*. April 2018.  
<https://www.consumerreports.org/cro/pharmacies/buying-guide/index.htm>



- **Independent pharmacies are a better value than large chains** (and are not owned by PBMs). In a survey conducted by Consumers Union, the publisher of *Consumer Reports*, independent pharmacies were found to be lower priced than nearly every other pharmacy provider - and substantially lower than the largest retail pharmacies, many of whom are owned in whole or part by PBMs or receive “preferred” status promotion over independent pharmacies.<sup>2</sup>
- **Independent pharmacy customers are targeted and steered by PBMs.** If by “can’t compete” Gov. Rauner means “in an environment where the multi-billion dollar competition outspends the little guy and sends intentionally confusing and misleading communications to small business pharmacy customers”, then yes, independent pharmacies cannot compete, especially with PBMs that own their own retail and mail order pharmacies - the very definition of “conflict of interest”.

As states begin to investigate and review the so-called savings PBMs claim they provide, evidence is mounting to prove PBMs are not only NOT saving patients, insurance payers and taxpayers money at the prescription counter, they may be contributing to the high cost of prescription medications and insurance premiums.

PUTT respectfully asks Gov. Rauner to work in the interest of ALL Illinois patients, providers and taxpayers by listening to the warnings of the state’s independent pharmacies. PBMs are not saving money, they are profiteering off the backs of the taxpayers.

# # #

---

<sup>2</sup> “New Reports Shows Independent Pharmacies Save You Big Money Over Chains,” American Independent Business Alliance. April 11, 2018. <https://www.amiba.net/community-drug-stores-cheaper-than-chains/>