



**LEGISLATION &  
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**  
1831 K Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811-4114  
Tel: (916) 504-5800  
TTY: (800) 719-5798  
Intake Line: (800) 776-5746  
Fax: (916) 504-5807  
[www.disabilityrightsca.org](http://www.disabilityrightsca.org)

---

March 28, 2021

Honorable Jim Wood  
Chair, Health Committee  
California State Assembly  
Capitol Building, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 458 (Kamlager) as amended March 23, 2021 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 458, the California Affordable Drug Importation Act.** This bill will be heard before Assembly Health Committee.

This bill will increase access to safe, affordable prescription drugs by establishing a state-run program to import wholesale pharmaceuticals from Canada. Upon approval from the federal government, the program will be expanded to include additional countries that meet standards that are comparable to U.S. standards.

Americans pay the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. One-third of Americans have skipped filling prescriptions because of the cost. 20 percent of Americans have had trouble paying for food and housing because of the cost of their medication. And, despite federal restrictions, almost 10 percent of Americans have imported a prescription drug at some point to get a lower price. They should be permitted to do so safely. Skyrocketing drug costs also drain employers, who are struggling more than ever to provide health insurance to employees and their dependents.

Over the last 3 years, prescription drugs have experienced *double-digit price increases* in the U.S. U.S. drug prices are nearly four times higher than average prices compared to similar countries. American consumers spend 40 percent more on prescriptions per person than Canada and [twice as much](#) as the average major industrialized country, even when accounting for rebates.

Prescription drug importation is a powerful tool to address the burden that high drug costs pose to the state and to patients. AB 458 will not only lower drug costs and increase access to medicines, but also will ensure that the drugs that are imported into California are safe and effective.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sawait Seyoum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sawait Seyoum  
Senior Legislative Advocate  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee  
Honorable Sydney Kamlager, California State Senate  
Office of Senator Kamlager  
Gino Folchi, Consultant, Republican Caucus