Human Services Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SB-494 / Bill Status / Public Hearing Testimony
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BIPARTISAN PRESCRIPTION DRUG TASK FORCE.
Vote Date: 3/19/2026
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/17/2026
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to implement and build upon the recommendations of the Bipartisan Prescription Drug Task Force by strengthening Connecticut's strategy for addressing prescription drug affordability, availability, and oversight. It includes provisions to expand the state's ability to negotiate supplemental rebates, monitor and respond to drug shortages, and formalize ongoing review of pharmaceutical pricing and supply issues. The purpose of the bill is to respond to rising prescription drug costs and persistent supply challenges that impact both patients and the healthcare system. By enhancing state oversight and coordination, the bill aims to improve access to essential medications, reduce financial burdens on consumers and the state, and ensure a more stable and transparent prescription drug market in Connecticut.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

Substitute language (LCO 3452) to revise and refine the original bill after committee review, incorporate feedback and make the proposal more workable and targeted. The substitute bill restructures and clarifies how the state will implement the Bipartisan Prescription Drug Task Force recommendations adjusting provisions related to drug pricing oversight, rebate strategies, and supply monitoring to better align with existing state processes and stakeholder input.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Department of Social Services (DSS), Andrea Barton Reeves, Commissioner: provided generally supportive but qualified testimony on SB 494, recognizing the importance of addressing prescription drug costs and improving oversight of pharmaceutical pricing and supply. However, she raised concerns about implementation, noting that certain provisions may create administrative complexity, overlap with existing state efforts, or require additional resources, and emphasized the need to align the bill with current programs and ensure it is operationally feasible for the state to administer.

Connecticut General Assembly, Senate Democrats Office, Senator Martin Looney, Senate President Pro Tempore: supports, as the bill advances the work of the Bipartisan Prescription Drug Task Force to address rising prescription drug costs and improve affordability for Connecticut residents. He highlighted that implementing these recommendations would strengthen the state's ability to manage drug pricing and access, helping ensure residents—particularly those with ongoing medical needs—can obtain necessary medications in a more reliable and cost-effective manner.

Department of Economic and Community Development, Daniel O'Keefe, Commissioner: raised concerns, emphasizing that certain provisions particularly those related to drug pricing controls and rebate requirements could have unintended consequences on the state's life sciences and biotechnology sectors. He noted that while addressing prescription drug affordability is important, the bill should be carefully balanced to avoid discouraging innovation, investment, and economic growth within Connecticut's pharmaceutical and biotech industries.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Pradipta Mazumder submitted general support of SB 494.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Biotechnology Innovation Organization, Director, Stephen Burm, State Government Affairs-Northeast: opposes, arguing that the bill's requirement to significantly increase supplemental drug rebates could undermine pharmaceutical innovation and distort pricing structures**,** potentially limiting patient access to certain medications. He emphasized that mandating additional rebates may create unintended consequences in the drug market, including reduced incentives for manufacturers and challenges to maintaining a stable and sustainable pharmaceutical supply system.

Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), Rachel Latham, Senior Director: opposes, arguing the bill's rebate and pricing provisions—particularly those requiring additional supplemental rebates—could disrupt the existing Medicaid drug pricing framework and have unintended consequences for patients and manufacturers. They

emphasized that pharmaceutical manufacturers already provide significant rebates, and further mandates could reduce incentives for innovation and potentially limit patient access to certain medications.

Pfizer, Ken Hiscoe, Director, State Government Relations: opposes, specifically objecting to provisions that would require additional statutory supplemental rebates**,** arguing that such mandates could disrupt existing federal Medicaid rebate structures and pricing frameworks. They emphasized that imposing further rebate requirements could create unintended consequences in the pharmaceutical market, including reduced flexibility for manufacturers and potential impacts on patient access to medications. Expressed concerns regarding lack of clarity in Section 3(C).

Reported by: Mackenzie Frenette **Date: April 2, 2026**