

Aug-21-06 Governor Corzine Signs Legislation Establishing Prescription Drug Retail Price Registry

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CONTACT: Anthony Coley

Brendan Gilfillan

PHONE: 609-777-2600

GOVERNOR CORZINE SIGNS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING PRESCRIPTION DRUG RETAIL PRICE REGISTRY

EAST BRUNSWICK – Governor Jon S. Corzine today signed legislation establishing the New Jersey Prescription Drug Retail Price Registry, which will provide consumers with retail price information for the 150 most frequently prescribed prescription drugs in the state.

The new law requires the Division of Consumer Affairs to establish and maintain a website in English and Spanish that allows visitors to comparison-shop for prescription drugs by name, dosage, and zip code. The registry information will also be available on a toll-free hotline and at local pharmacies.

“This program will let consumers comparison-shop, increase price competition between pharmacies, and help lower prescription costs,” Governor Corzine said during the bill-signing at the East Brunswick Senior Center. “Filling a prescription shouldn’t mean emptying the cupboard. This price registry is a significant step toward making health care more affordable.”

A recent study by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute found that prices varied by as much as 20 percent among pharmacies. The Institute found, for example, that while one New Jersey pharmacy sold the cholesterol drug Lipitor for close to \$100, another sold the same drug for close to \$80. In New York State, a similar online registry saved consumers an average of \$17 per prescription, according to the Kaiser Foundation Health Policy Report.

The overall retail price will be based on the cost of the medication as well as the dispensing fee, which is a fee imposed by the pharmacy for filling the

prescription. The overall price cannot exceed the usual and customary, posted or advertised price charged by the pharmacy. The pricing information is also required to indicate the actual price paid by a retail purchaser for the listed drug at the listed dosage. The registry will be updated at least weekly.

The legislation (A-2537/S-1396) was sponsored by Assemblymembers Linda Greenstein, Herb Conaway, Patrick Diegnan Jr., Peter Barnes Jr., Gordon Johnson and Brian Stack, and Senators Barbara Buono and Joseph Vitale.