

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 99

To encourage consumers to consult with their pharmacists in connection with the purchase and use of over-the-counter drug products.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 12, 1997

Mr. DASCHLE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

RESOLUTION

To encourage consumers to consult with their pharmacists in connection with the purchase and use of over-the-counter drug products.

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

3 The Congress finds the following:

4 (1) The Food and Drug Administration has
5 proposed that the content and format of over-the-
6 counter (OTC) drug product labels be made more
7 user-friendly to help consumers better understand
8 how to properly use these medications.

9 (2) Almost 60 percent of total OTC drug prod-
10 uct sales of \$29,000,000,000 are made by commu-

1 nity retail pharmacies, where a pharmacist is avail-
2 able for consultation with the consumer about the
3 product.

4 (3) A significant number of potent prescription
5 medications have been switched to OTC status over
6 the last few years and others are likely to be
7 switched over in the next few years. Many consum-
8 ers may be unaware of the potential problems that
9 may occur when OTC and prescription drugs are in-
10 appropriately used together, and should be encour-
11 aged to consult with their doctor and pharmacist.
12 The pharmacist may have the only complete record
13 of all the medications being taken by the consumer
14 that would help avoid these problems.

15 (4) Pharmacists can help the consumer select
16 the most cost-effective OTC drug product based on
17 the symptoms presented to the pharmacist.

18 (5) Interaction with the pharmacist on using
19 OTC drug products is particularly important for
20 older Americans, who already use one-third of all
21 prescription drug products and one-third of OTC
22 drug products. As the population ages, older Ameri-
23 cans are expected to use almost half of all OTC drug
24 products by the year 2000. According to recent stud-
25 ies, the health care system, including the Medicaid

1 and Medicare programs, incur billions of dollars in
2 unnecessary costs each year as a result of medica-
3 tion-related problems.

4 (6) The importance of consumer interaction
5 with the pharmacist about OTC drug products was
6 recognized by Congress when it required that Medic-
7 aid prospective drug utilization review programs in-
8 clude screening for “serious interactions with non-
9 prescription or OTC medications”.

10 (7) Encouraging pharmacist interaction with
11 consumers on OTC drug products is consistent with
12 recent attempts by consumer groups, the pharmacy
13 community, and the Food and Drug Administration
14 to increase the quality and quantity of written and
15 oral information being provided to consumers with
16 their prescription medications.

17 **SEC. 2. CONSULTATION.**

18 It is the sense of the Senate that the Food and Drug
19 Administration should include a provision in the Adminis-
20 tration’s new final regulation on the content and format
21 of over-the-counter drug labels which requires that such
22 labels include the phrase “Consult your doctor or phar-
23 macist”.

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