

RetireSafe

Preserving Your Retirement. Securing Your Benefits.

**The Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator
Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President**

As the President of RetireSafe, and speaking for our half a million supporters, I want to convey our support for maintaining and strengthening the patent laws and Intellectual property protection that are key to medical innovation in our country and worldwide. These safe guards are the foundation of innovation and offer the chance for medical miracles and safety that are so important to older Americans.

Seniors in America are obviously the biggest user of pharmaceutical products and as such they rely on the availability of safe medicine. It has been shown that the countries that fail to enact and enforce stringent patent and intellectual property protection laws are often the source for dangerous counterfeit medicines that endanger the lives of vulnerable older Americans. At a time when medical costs are increasing, the temptation to purchase cheaper medicine from an unknown source is strong. Seniors may not have the ability to verify the authenticity of a particular distributor or, even worse, may be led into a web site that looks legitimate, but proves to distribute sub-standard product. The strong patent protection on the medicine itself and on the ability to manufacture and distribute is key to protect these older Americans who count on such safeguards to preserve their peace of mind.

Older Americans also look to the pharmaceutical industry to continue to develop new medicines that will allow them to extend their lives, and enhance their quality of life as well. A price cannot be put on the joy a grandmother receives from being able to travel to see her grandchildren, a trip made possible by medicines developed through long and expensive research. These miracles don't happen by accident. Patent protection and the preservation of intellectual property are important engines of innovation. No company will be willing to invest from \$500 million to more than \$1Billion, and 12 to 15 years of their time, if there is no chance of recouping the cost and making a profit to invest in the next round of research. The protection of their patent is the only way to insure that critical innovation continues.

As America searches for the solution to skyrocketing health care costs it is important to understand that the new medicines are key to reducing hospital stays and expensive tests. The reduction in costs made possible by new blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol medicines is almost incalculable. Strong patent laws and the protection of intellectual property are key factors in our continuing search for the next silver bullet that will reduce hospital stays and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans.

Older Americans are counting on the government to ensure the safety of the medicines they take while preserving an environment that encourages and rewards innovation.



Thair Phillips
President
RetireSafe