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Mr. Allbritton, Mr. Kaminski, Ms. Budoff Brown, and Mr. Hounshell,

We wish to bring your attention to an advertisement being run in one of your publications that has been rated as “mostly false” by a nonpartisan and reputable source and to ask you to immediately suspend this advertisement in the interest of public health and safety.

Over the past weeks, Politico Playbook readers have been served advertisements by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) opposing Speaker Pelosi’s drug pricing plan. In these advertisements, there is text claiming to be offering “facts” about the plan, including one delivered in a way that could lead readers to believe that they are reading these “facts” in Playbook itself, not in an advertisement (see Appendix B).

However, [a new analysis by Kaiser Health News](#), a non-profit and editorially independent organization “dedicated to filling the need for trusted information on national health issues” confirms that these advertisements are “mostly false” and include assertions that are refuted by experts.

Among other rebuttals of the advertisement, Kaiser Health News reports that:

- “[PhRMA] didn’t offer much evidence explaining how or why this would happen, or acknowledging that it would involve stepping away from potentially lucrative markets. And experts dispute the idea — Dusetzina called the industry line ‘a scare tactic.’”
- “...experts called this [PhRma] analysis suspect at best...’utter nonsense.’”
- “‘This is not a serious analysis of the question of trade-offs of this policy and innovation. This is fearmongering,’ Dusetzina said.”
- “Other analyses PhRMA pointed us to — which might ostensibly support their claim — don’t stand up to scrutiny.”
- “...We rate [the Politico Playbook advertisement] Mostly False.”

Given this new analysis, we request that these false advertisements be removed from the Playbook website and that further advertisements from PhRMA using assertions that have been labeled false be rejected using clause [7\(D\) of your advertising Terms and Conditions](#): “POLITICO, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to refuse any submitted advertisement.”

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These are not simply harmless falsehoods by a DC trade organization. This is a matter of life and death for millions of Americans. Here are some facts:

- Over 10 years (2007 to 2017): Prescription drug price expenditures [increased](#) more than 40 percent to a whopping \$333 billion.
- March 2019: The CDC [found](#) one in three uninsured Americans didn't take their medication as prescribed to reduce costs.
- June 2019: A survey [found](#) 26% of patients with diabetes rationed insulin at least once in the last year. A separate 2018 survey [demonstrated](#) that nearly 1 in 4 American diabetics had asked their doctors for a cheaper alternative to insulin.
- October 2019: The ICER report [found](#) drug price increases were unsupported by advances in innovation.

As Congress debates drug pricing legislation, readers of Politico Playbook shouldn't be delivered false advertising on an issue of such consequence. We hope that you take immediate action to protect the integrity of your publication and to make sure that advertisements in your flagship newsletter meet appropriate standards. We would be happy to follow up with additional information and data if helpful and look forward to your response.

Kyle Herrig
President, Accountable.US

Appendix A

POLITICOPLAYBOOK

BY ANNA PALMER AND JAKE SHERMAN

Presented by



○ DRIVING THE DAY

Appendix B

A message from PhRMA:

A dark teal banner with white and light teal text. On the left, it reads "Stop Speaker Pelosi's Drug Pricing Plan" in a large, bold font. On the right, there is the PhRMA logo and a white button with the text "ACT NOW" in bold black letters. The background of the banner features faint, overlapping images of pill capsules.

FACT: Speaker Pelosi's drug pricing plan would siphon \$1 trillion or more from biopharmaceutical innovators over the next 10 years. [Get the facts.](#)

Appendix C

A message from PhRMA:

FACT: Speaker Pelosi's drug pricing plan would siphon \$1 trillion or more from biopharmaceutical innovators over the next 10 years. CBO's preliminary estimate found this bill "would result in lower spending on research and development and thus reduce the introduction of new drugs." [Get the facts.](#)