

September 25, 2017

Mr. Larry J. Merlo
President and Chief Executive Officer, CVS Health
One CVS Drive
Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895

Dear Mr. Merlo:

I am writing to express my support and appreciation for CVS Health's proactive changes to combat the opioid epidemic announced last week. It is my hope that other stakeholders take notice and engage in similar practices.

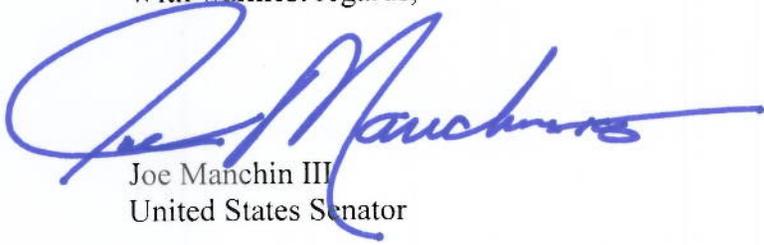
As the senior Senator from West Virginia, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects of prescription drug abuse on individuals, families, and communities in my home state. We have lost almost 200,000 Americans to overdoses related to prescription opioids since 1999, including more than 700 West Virginians just last year alone. This trend cannot continue, which is why I am pleased to know that CVS Health will be implementing strong guidelines and providing more education and awareness on the dangers of opioids.

In rural states, like West Virginia, our pharmacies play an integral role in administering healthcare services. CVS Health's initiatives to limit the number of opioid pills prescribed to what the patient needs, boost funding for addiction programs and counseling, and strengthen programs for the safe disposal of opioids will help combat prescription drug abuse. Additionally, I appreciate and share CVS Health's commitment to our Community Health Centers (CHCs) because they are often the only source of care in many rural areas.

While I applaud your efforts, there is more that needs to be done. All stakeholders – physicians, pharmacies, community leaders, law enforcement, and countless others – must come together to find common sense solutions to this problem. Throughout my time in the United States Senate, I have sponsored numerous pieces of legislation that would tackle this epidemic from all sides. These include bills to invest resources in prevention, fund treatment centers, educate prescribers, and better coordinate patient care. As long as I am in the Senate, I will continue working with all my colleagues in a bipartisan manner to enact policies that will equip our federal, state, and local communities with the tools and resources they need.

Again, thank you for your continued commitment to this fight, and I encourage you to continue implementing innovative practices that will reduce prescription drug abuse.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator