

RetireSafe

Preserving Your Retirement. Securing Your Benefits.

March 10, 2009

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo
U.S. House of Representatives
205 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

On behalf of RetireSafe's nearly 400,000 senior citizen supporters across America, I am pleased to offer our strong support for the Pathway for Biosimilars Act that you are introducing, along with Congressman Joe Barton, and congressman Jay Inslee. This critical legislation will facilitate a much-needed pathway for the production, approval, and marketing of biosimilars that promotes competition and lower prices, as well as, provides for the rigorous testing that will ensure patient safety, and it encourage innovation. Those last two elements are especially important to the older Americans that RetireSafe represents.

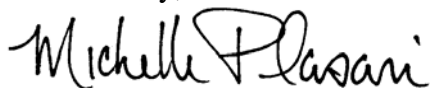
Subtle or minor differences between these so-called "generic biologics" and the original lifesaving biologic therapies could easily threaten public safety and result in disaster. Efforts to bring biosimilars to market must be done carefully, with the requisite clinical trials to prove absolute safety and equivalent efficacy. Your bill does that. To do otherwise would cheat and endanger patients whose lives have been spared, extended, and enhanced by the name brand biologics.

Safety must be the number one concern regarding biosimilars, and to ignore it, to force follow-on biologics into treatment regimens before being proven as safe and effective beyond question, would be nothing short of criminal. Saving money is a hollow victory if it costs lives, and elderly Americans are at the greatest risk. The Pathway for Biosimilars Act recognizes that fact, and we applaud you, Congressman Barton, and Congressman Inslee for it.

Your legislation also protects the original innovator's ability to continue their critical research and development of new treatments and cures. Were it not for their original efforts, their sacrifice and their investment, there would be no biologics for those following to attempt to copy. We must allow and encourage these biotechnology pioneers to continue to innovate and thus to bring new therapies and cures to the people who desperately need them. The 12-year data exclusivity you provide to the original innovator will incentivize the development of new medical breakthroughs that seniors are counting on. The additional two-year exclusivity for a significant new indication, as well as the exclusivity awarded to the first interchangeable biosimilar, will continue to reward innovation.

Again, RetireSafe strongly supports your Pathway for Biosimilars Act, and urges your House colleagues to join you as cosponsors of this outstanding legislation.

Sincerely,



President