



California Labor Federation | AFL-CIO

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Governor Expected to Side with PhRMA, Veto Rx Bills *Schwarzenegger Proposal Offers Poor Alternative for California Consumers*

Sacramento – Governor Schwarzenegger is widely expected this weekend to veto a package of prescription drug bills passed by the Legislature in August. Included in the package are bills to rein in pharmaceutical marketing, make it easier to purchase medications from Canada, and to require more transparency from drug industry middlemen known as “pharmacy benefits managers.”

Governor Schwarzenegger announced his opposition to several of the bills after returning from the Republican National Convention at the end of August. Pharmaceutical companies helped fund his RNC trip with contributions of \$325,000.

“Governor Schwarzenegger has received more money from PhRMA than any politician other than George Bush,” said Art Pulaski, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. “Special interests are winning the battle for Schwarzenegger’s favor.”

Instead of the consumer protection bills on his desk, the Governor is offering the pharmaceutical companies’ own voluntary price discounts, which are strongly opposed by consumer and senior citizen groups. “The governor’s proposal is ‘Bush II,’ the sequel, with company discount cards that are being widely rejected by senior citizens because they offer no real savings,” said Nan Brasmer, President of the California Alliance for Retired Americans.

“Meaningless discounts from big drug companies are no substitute for real prescription drug reform,” said Angie Wei, Legislative Director for the California Labor Federation. “The Governor’s proposal helps big PhRMA more than consumers. It’s time for Governor Schwarzenegger to put the interests of regular Californians before the pharmaceutical industry.”

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