



Marino Bill Would Level Playing Field For Community Pharmacies

Jim and Dawn Gaudino pride themselves in the personal, round-the-clock, neighborly service they provide their customers at Cook's Pharmacy in Kingston.

Like other independent pharmacy owners, the Gaudinos realize that going the extra mile is what differentiates them from the drug store chains that are becoming more visible throughout Pennsylvania and the United States.

They also realize that they are at a severe disadvantage when it comes to competitive pricing of prescription medicine.

Large drugstore chains can offer lower prices to their consumers because they can negotiate better deals with pharmaceutical companies for bulk quantities of medication, Jim Gaudino said.

HR1946, the Preserving Our Hometown Independent Pharmacies Act, introduced by U.S. Rep. Tom Marino, PA-10, would change that by exempting



Congressman Marino talks about a bill he introduced that would 'level the playing field' for community pharmacists at Cook's Pharmacy, Kingston. Owners are Dawn and Jim Gaudino, at right.

independent drugstores from antitrust laws that prohibit them from banding together to buy medication.

"This bill sets out to level that playing field," Marino said. "It would not cost the federal government or anyone else a penny. As a matter of fact, it would actually lower the prices for independent pharmacies like Cook's and they, in turn, would pass it on to the consumer."

HR 1946, is the second bill introduced by Marino since he took office in January. It would

amend antitrust law to allow independent pharmacies to band together and negotiate prices for prescription medicine, and give them more leverage when they negotiate reimbursement rates with insurance companies and pharmacy benefit managers.

"Independent pharmacies are the most reliable and accessible pharmacies," Jim Gaudino said. "They fill prescriptions and provide excellent service and also help patients manage disease, like diabetes."



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RECENT VOTES:

YES: HR2219, Department of Defense Appropriations Act which provides \$649 billion in funding for Defense Department operations for fiscal year 2012. Non-emergency funding is \$9 billion less than President Obama had requested; allocation for emergency spending is \$39 billion less than was spent last year. Passed, 336-87.

YES: HR 2354, Energy & Water Appropriations Act, funds the Department of Energy, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and various regional water and power authorities. Total funding of \$30.6 billion, a decrease of over \$1 billion below FY11; provides \$1.028 billion in emergency funding to the Army Corps of Engineers to repair damage caused by recent storms and floods. No earmarks included. Passed, 219-196.

YES: HR 2018, The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011 which restricts some of EPA's powers over a state's water quality standards. Passed, 239-184.

YES: HR2417: Better Use of Light Bulbs Act would have repealed 2007 legislation that bans the manufacture and sale of certain light bulbs and impose new regulations on light bulbs and lamps. Vote was 233-193 in favor of the repeal. However, a 2/3 majority was needed (285 votes) so it failed.

YES: HR1309, Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2011 provides for a five-year reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program; reforms the program to improve its financial stability, reduce the burden on taxpayers, and provide avenues to increase private sector participation in the flood insurance market. Passed, 406-22.



FROM DC TO THE 10TH

Rep. Marino, above, gives a slide presentation at a town hall meeting in Lewisburg.

Top row, from left: the congressman visits Luzerne National Bank; Rep. Marino welcomes representatives of the Army War College in his Washington office; and tours Sanofi Pasteur with Congressman Charlie Dent.

At left: Rep. Marino with Joseph and Rose Mattioli on race day at the Pocono Raceway; greeting Luzerne County veterans on their visit to Washington; and talking with constituents of the Susquehanna Valley area.

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