

# **FY '12 Conference Committee**

## **Support Prescription Discount Co-Pay Programs**

### **House SECTION 162**

**The House (SECTION 162) and Senate (SECTION ###) FY '12 budgets include measures allowing consumers to utilize prescription discount co-pay programs.**

#### **The Problem:**

**Massachusetts is the only state that prohibits consumers from utilizing prescription discount programs.**

Consumers are struggling with the high cost co-pays and out of pocket costs. In too many cases they don't fill their prescriptions. Others try to make do by taking prescriptions every other day instead of daily or by taking half-doses. Such options put people's health at risk.

#### **Please support HOUSE SECTION 162:**

**Give access to co-pay assistance programs:** This measure would provide consumers with access to cost-saving prescription discount programs when purchasing their prescription drugs.

**Save consumers money:** Prescription discount programs are designed to hold down the cost of medications for patients and can encourage adherence to medications. Studies show that as out-of-pocket costs for patients increase, consumers are less likely to take their medication as prescribed. For example, patients may refill their prescriptions less often, take less medication than prescribed, skip doses, or not fill an important prescription at all. Discount programs can take various forms, but all reduce out-of-pocket expenses for the consumer.

**Helps patients stay healthy:** By reducing the cost of a co-pay, for example, these discounts are designed to help patients afford to stay on medications that their doctor has decided are medically necessary (and their insurer has approved). It is in the best interest of everyone that patients refill their prescriptions and continue to take their prescriptions as directed by their physician (and approved by their insurer). This can lead to a reduction in long term healthcare costs.

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This measure was passed by the House of Representatives last Spring. The State Senate passed a version of this legislation in July 2010. The 2 bills were not reconciled before the end of the session. Now each have included a version in their FY '12 state budgets. The Senate version has roadblocks toward program implementation. We urge you to support the House SECTION 162.

# **MassRxHelp.org**