



July 2017 NEWSLETTER

**We want to publish your news - what's happening with your chapter?
Send an article & photo to VicePresident@TDW.org.**

President's Letter

I recently posted a report on Facebook about being at a pharmacy and witnessing an older gentleman not having insurance and being unable to afford a new prescription that cost \$500 a month. There was a coupon to receive the medication free for one month, but after that you had to pay or do without. The gentleman left without his medication. I was appalled and heartbroken. Many friends agreed that it was difficult for people without insurance to purchase medications and held the drug companies responsible for inflated prices. However, several friends posted of having to forgo medications even though they had insurance – their insurers refused to pay for expensive medications.

I have heard several Republican legislators say that prices would be driven down if only we let the free market operate. I was puzzled because I don't think that the gentleman who couldn't afford his medication had any leverage or opportunity to negotiate a lower price for his medications. However, I decided to see what the right-wing American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the source of many conservative model bills and legislative advice, had to say on the subject.

ALEC coaches legislators on the high costs to develop drugs and how controlling prices will strangle research and discovery on the next life-saving medications. Furthermore, ALEC says



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that because of the role of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) we don't really have to worry about drug prices. PBMs negotiate on behalf of commercial health insurers, employers, government employee plans, Medicare Part D drug plans and "others." Apparently PBMs saved nearly \$350 billion for the above-listed **payers** in 2016. However, ALEC points out consumers may not see as much savings since co-pays can be based on the list price of a medication, not the negotiated price. And, PBMs do not have to include all drugs in their negotiations so your drug may not be covered even with insurance. There is absolutely no mention of how someone without insurance can negotiate with a drug company because *the bottom line is that they can't*.

I know that my last message was also on health care, but we simply cannot allow the Republicans to value businesses and tax breaks over the lives of people. This new iteration of the health care bill still hurts far too many people. It still imposes drastic cuts to Medicaid. We have a short reprieve since the Republicans apparently won't bring the health care bill to a vote until after Senator McCain returns from surgery. Use this time wisely to tell Senator Cruz and Senator Cornyn to vote no on the Republican healthcare bill. Call Senator Collins office and thank her for voting no. Call Senator Lisa Murkowski and encourage her to vote her conscience as she said she would, despite an attempt to buy her off with approximately \$1 billion in funds for Alaska. America must do better.

Your President,
Carol Jablonski

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Summer Retreat Is Sold Out!



This year's TDW Summer Retreat at the [Canyon of the Eagles Resort](#) is so popular that the River Cruise Dinner sold out quickly, tickets for the Wine Tour then went fast - and every chair for the retreat was booked by July 15th! Yippee!

Next year, you'll need to register quickly to reserve your spot!

LOCAL CHAPTERS NEWS

Bell County

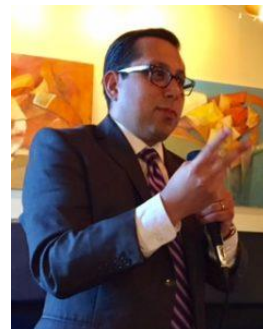
BCTDW along the friends and family of Louie Minor are doing a block walk in Killeen on July 28th. Louie Minor is the Democratic Candidate for Congress District 31.

BCTDW is hitting the ground running!



Bexar County

State Representative Diego Bernal, on June 19th, gave a wrap-up of the 85th Texas Legislative session. He noted that this was the most conservative, least progressive session he'd experienced. Rep. Bernal stated that this session resulted in attacks on women's health, local control, and public education, to name a few. He stated that his job has been to modify where he can and otherwise object to the more egregious bills.



North Dallas

NORTH DALLAS TEXAS DEMOCRATIC WOMEN

Each 2d Saturday of each month, NDTDW members see a really good movie together. Afterwards they have dinner to discuss the movie and, of course, politics. Doesn't the "NDTDW Movie Club" sound like tons of fun?!



A "movie club" is a good way to recruit new members, spend time with like-minded folks, and enjoy a night out!

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