

## House Panel to Use Insulin as Case Study for High Drug Prices

By Shira Stein

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- Energy and Commerce Oversight subcommittee likely to hold hearing in March
- Jurisdiction for legislation lies with full committee

The House Energy and Commerce Oversight subcommittee plans to use the high cost of insulin as a case study for the larger issue of high drug prices, Chairwoman Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) said in an interview.

DeGette said the subcommittee will likely hold a hearing in March on insulin pricing.

Many other House committees are holding hearings on drug pricing, but the Energy and Commerce Committee has the technical know-how and the staff to “dive deeply” on drug pricing and the jurisdiction to write legislation to address it, DeGette said.

DeGette also serves as the co-chairwoman of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus and has made the issue a focus during her time in Congress.

DeGette completed a yearlong investigation in November 2018 looking at the insulin pricing market and made several policy recommendations that have been discussed by other members of Congress more recently, including capping out-of-pocket costs for certain prescription drugs and increased pricing transparency.

DeGette and Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone Jr. (D-N.J.) sent letters to Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Sanofi Jan. 30, focusing on how they set the prices they charge for insulin, patents for their products, how they could lower insulin prices, and how they expect the insulin price market to change in the next five years.

The Senate Finance Committee also opened a bipartisan probe into the issue of insulin pricing Feb. 22 and sent letters to those three companies asking about their price-setting practices, research and development costs, and product patents, among other issues.

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