ACT UP Letter Asks U.S. Senate to Negotiate Sovaldi Price Cut

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The New York chapter of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) has sent a letter to the U.S. Senate Finance Committee asking it to negotiate with Gilead Sciences to reduce the price of Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), according to an ACT UP statement.

In the United States, the hepatitis C drug costs about $1,000 per pill, or nearly $84,000 for a full course of treatment. ACT UP seeks a price reduction of at least 90 percent. Gilead has made nearly $5.8 billion in Sovaldi sales since the start of this year.

ACT UP argues that the drug's current pricing is unfair, will ultimately cost billions of dollars in unnecessary U.S. health care spending and also will seriously limit the number of people able to access the treatment.

In addition to seeking price negotiations, the letter also proposes the Senate initiate a patent buyout. If both approaches fail, ACT UP suggests, the Senate should then waive Gilead's Sovaldi patent under the "government use" statute.

In the United States, more than 1 million people have HIV and more than 3 million people have the hepatitis C virus (HCV). About 225,000 to 330,000 Americans are coinfected with both.

To read the statement, click here. To read the letter, click here.

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