



U.S. Senate Report Criticizes Gilead for Hepatitis C Drug Costs

December 15, 2015

The U.S. Senate Finance Committee has called out Gilead Sciences for the price of its \$1,000-per-pill hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment Sovaldi (sofosbuvir). The committee alleges that the drug company pursued a profitable business model with little regard for the lives affected by the virus, [Time reports](#).

For the 144-page committee report, senators reviewed nearly 20,000 pages of internal Gilead documents, as well as data from several state Medicaid health programs over the course of 18 months. Their goal was to assess how exactly the pharmaceutical company priced the hep C treatment, and to focus on the effects drug pricing had on the number of people receiving hep C treatment in 2014.

Several documents cited in the report proved troubling for lawmakers: A slide from an internal Gilead presentation in July 2013 predicted that up to 47 percent of health insurers would restrict access to Sovaldi if the regimen were priced around \$90,000 per patient. The cost-analysis slideshow also anticipated that doctors and health advocates across the United States would be critical of any price upward of \$80,000 per cure. Even so, Gilead decided on an \$84,000 price tag for a standard 12-week course of treatment when Sovaldi launched in December 2013.

The Wall Street Journal [reports](#) that the Senate committee also discovered an email from Kevin Young, Gilead's executive vice president for commercial operations, sent to his staff shortly before the drug's launch, saying: "Two sincere requests—Let's not fold to advocacy pressure in 2014. Let's hold our position whatever competitors do or whatever the headlines."

Senators claim the report proves that the pharmaceutical company was fully aware that as it increased the price of its hep C drugs, the number of Americans able to access the treatment would drastically decline. In 2014, only 2.4 percent of U.S. Medicaid beneficiaries were able to access Sovaldi.

In a recent response to the legislators, Gilead said it "respectfully disagree(s) with the conclusions of their report," adding that the company has recently instated several rebates for states and pharmacy benefits managers across the country to help mitigate the costs of its drugs. Activists believe the battle for affordable hep C treatment is far from over.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/senate-gilead-report-28177-298051006>