



CQ NEWS
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Big Pharma Fills Candidate Coffers in Biosimilar Fight

By Joe Williams, CQ Roll Call

Lobbying by biotech companies spiked in many states that were considering legislation to allow pharmacists to swap a brand-name biologic with a copycat drug, a CQ Roll Call analysis of state lobbying disclosures found.

Twenty states have enacted laws giving pharmacists the ability to swap a brand-name biologic with a copycat version.

The generic versions, known as biosimilars, are expected to reduce spending on brand-name biologic drugs by \$44.2 billion between 2014 and 2024, according to a 2014 study by the RAND Corporation.

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The Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy, which opposes most of the state measures, argues that distinguishing one category of FDA-approved drugs - the biosimilars - from every other product on the market could lower usage among patients.

“What they are doing with the legislation is they are making it harder and less likely that interchangeables will be dispensed, so it doesn’t matter what the FDA comes up with,” Reginia Benjamin, director of legislative affairs for the group, said in a recent interview.

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