

Key Facts to Know Before Novo Nordisk CEO Lars Jørgensen Appears at the Senate HELP Committee

1. Novo Nordisk charges Americans up to [15 times more](#) than it charges other wealthy countries for Ozempic and Wegovy.

- Novo Nordisk’s pricing isn’t justified by research and development costs. Since Ozempic’s launch in 2018, Novo Nordisk has spent [over \\$44 billion](#) enriching its shareholders through stock buybacks and dividends—over twice as much as it spent on R&D across its entire portfolio.
- Nor is it justified by production costs. Generic Ozempic and Wegovy could be sold profitably for around [\\$5](#) and [\\$13](#) per month, respectively. Novo Nordisk prices them over 100 times higher for Americans. Generics firms have indicated they would sell generics for [less than \\$100](#) per month.
- Novo Nordisk has amassed [nearly \\$50 billion](#) from Ozempic and Wegovy since their launch.

2. Novo Nordisk’s exorbitant pricing in the U.S. has imposed widespread cost barriers on patients and financial burden on public programs.

- The annual cost to the healthcare system for covering Wegovy for half of the eligible population (\$411 billion) would [exceed](#) the expenditure on all retail prescription drugs in 2022 (\$406 billion). Without substantial price reductions, Wegovy could cost the U.S. health care system \$1 trillion by 2031, potentially approaching \$2 trillion with greater uptake.
- According to a KFF poll, [1 in 8](#) adults have used GLP-1s (such as Ozempic and Wegovy), with over half saying that it was difficult to afford their costs.
- Between 2020 and 2021, Medicare’s spending on Ozempic increased by more than a billion dollars, and between 2021 and 2022, spending increased by an astonishing [\\$2 billion](#).
- Officials in [North Carolina](#) and [West Virginia](#) have raised alarm over how these drugs could cost state health plans covering public employees over \$150 million a year, which could increase the cost of premiums in some cases up to 200%.

3. To avert the ruinous financial consequences of Novo Nordisk’s greed, the Biden administration can use its authority under [28 U.S.C. § 1498](#) to allow generic production of these drugs, resulting in lower costs for patients and federal health programs.

- After unsuccessful efforts to negotiate lower prices for its State Health Plan with GLP-1 manufacturers, North Carolina’s Treasurer [requested](#) that HHS initiate efforts to negotiate voluntary licenses between Novo Nordisk and generic drug producers for supply to federal, state, and local government payers.
- If Novo Nordisk refuses to voluntarily license their products, the federal government can use its authority under 28 U.S.C. § 1498 to authorize generic competitors to these price gouged drugs, as described in Public Citizen’s [petition](#) to HHS, saving Medicare [\\$14 billion](#) in the first two years alone, even under conservative assumptions of uptake among patients.