

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Doug McMillon  
President and CEO  
Walmart, Inc.  
702 S.W. 8th Street  
Bentonville, AR 72716

Dear Mr. McMillon,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Walmart sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Walmart to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>1</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>2</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>1</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>2</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>3</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>4</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>5</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>6</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>7</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>3</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>5</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>7</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURBY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Andy Jassy  
President and CEO  
Amazon.com, Inc.  
410 Terry Avenue North  
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Jassy,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Amazon.com sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Amazon.com to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>8</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>9</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>8</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>9</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>10</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>11</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>12</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>13</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>14</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>10</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>11</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>12</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>13</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>14</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURBY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Rodney McMullen  
Chairman and CEO  
Kroger, Inc.  
1014 Vine Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Dear Mr. McMullen,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Kroger sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Kroger to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>15</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>16</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>15</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>16</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>17</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>18</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>19</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>20</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>21</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>17</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>19</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>20</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>21</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Karen S. Lynch  
President and CEO  
CVS Health  
One CVS Drive  
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Dear Ms. Lynch,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests CVS Health sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on CVS Health to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>22</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>23</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>22</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>23</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>24</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>25</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>26</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>27</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>28</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>24</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>26</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>27</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>28</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Rosalind Brewer  
CEO  
Walgreens Boots Alliance  
200 Wilmot Road  
Deerfield, IL 60015

Dear Ms. Brewer,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Walgreens Boots Alliance sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Walgreens Boots Alliance to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>29</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>30</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>29</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>30</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>31</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>32</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>33</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>34</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>35</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>31</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here’s Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>33</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>34</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>35</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Heyward Donigan  
President and CEO  
Rite Aid Corporation  
30 Hunter Lane  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Dear Ms. Donigan,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Rite Aid sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Rite Aid to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>36</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>37</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>36</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>37</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>38</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>39</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>40</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>41</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>42</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>38</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>39</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>40</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>41</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>42</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURBY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Kathryn McLay  
President and CEO  
Sam's Club  
2101 SE Simple Savings Drive  
Bentonville, AR 72716

Dear Ms. McLay,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Sam's Club sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Sam's Club to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>43</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>44</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>43</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>44</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>45</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>46</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>47</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>48</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>49</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>45</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>47</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>48</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>49</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

Brian Cornell  
Chairman and CEO  
Target, Inc.  
1000 Nicollet Mall TPS-3165  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Mr. Cornell,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Target sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Target to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>50</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>51</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>50</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>51</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>52</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>53</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>54</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>55</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>56</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>52</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>53</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>54</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>55</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>56</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR, CLIMATE, AND  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
FOREIGN RELATIONS  
CHAIR:  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
CHAIR:  
U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE

## United States Senate

SUITE SD-255  
DIRKSEN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107  
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING  
15 NEW SUBURBY STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312  
FALL RIVER, MA 02721  
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103  
413-785-4610

January 19, 2022

W. Craig Jelinek  
President and CEO  
Costco Wholesale Corporation  
999 Lake Drive  
Issaquah, WA 98027

Dear Mr. Jelinek,

I write to seek assurances that the at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests Costco sells are affordable to Americans who need them. As the Omicron variant causes a surge in COVID-19 cases and more Americans seek rapid at-home testing, consumers must not face prohibitive prices for these testing kits. As a major retailer of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests, your company has a responsibility to ensure that its price for these tests is fair, reasonable, and economical to those who need them during this public health emergency. I call on Costco to sell at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost through the duration of the public health emergency.

At-home testing is vital for identifying illness and stopping the spread of COVID-19. Officials at all levels of government are working to secure access to at-home tests, including distributing them to the public at no charge and providing them to schools and employers.<sup>57</sup> But access to at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests should not be limited to those able to secure them for free or those who can afford to pay the high prices currently charged for them.

The cost of at-home tests can pose a significant barrier to access. For example, at a retail price of roughly \$24.00 for a two-test kit,<sup>58</sup> a family of four would spend approximately \$50 every time it needs to test — hundreds of dollars a month assuming weekly testing. While the federal government works to distribute free rapid tests, and has recently required insurers to reimburse

---

<sup>57</sup> *In Boston and in Washington, Wu and Biden both promise to help break coronavirus testing logjam*, Boston Globe (Jan. 4, 2022), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/01/04/metro/biden-wu-promise-help-break-testing-logjam/>; Ted Wayman, *Delivery of 227,000 rapid COVID-19 tests for school employees begins in Massachusetts*, WCVB (Jan. 1, 2022), <https://www.wcvb.com/article/rapid-covid-19-tests-for-school-employees-january-1-2022/38649607#>.

<sup>58</sup> Sharon Terlap, *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

individuals for the cost of rapid tests they purchase,<sup>59</sup> many must still pay these costs out-of-pocket. For the millions of Americans concerned about their health, trying to protect friends and family from infection, or in need of a negative test for work, travel, or child care, these prices are simply too high.

I am particularly concerned that the cost of at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests sold at your stores and online marketplaces may be significantly and unreasonably marked-up from the wholesale cost of purchasing these tests from manufacturers and wholesalers.<sup>60</sup> In September 2021, several major retailers reached an agreement with the federal government to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests “at cost,” which meant consumers paid lower prices for these products.<sup>61</sup> However, following the expiration of this agreement in December 2021, these retailers raised prices by as much as 40 percent.<sup>62</sup>

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, major retailers and pharmacies have seen significant revenue growth and profits.<sup>63</sup> They were able to reap those benefits while the agreement to sell rapid COVID-19 antigen tests at cost was in effect. It, therefore, seems apparent that retailers can keep the price consumers pay for these at-home tests low and remain profitable. In this time of uncertainty and need, it is unacceptable that U.S. consumers face costs of \$12 or more for each at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen test. As we face an unprecedented wave of COVID cases, manufacturers and retailers must do more to ensure consumers see reasonable prices for these tests. I call on your company to voluntarily agree to sell them at cost through the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Emergency rooms, intensive care units, and health systems across the country are overwhelmed. Expanded access to testing can help to alleviate this strain on our health system. In addition to committing to lowering prices for at-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests and making them affordable for the millions of Americans whose lives and livelihoods depend on them, I ask that you respond to the following questions by January 27, 2022:

---

<sup>59</sup> Shannon Pettypiece, *Biden administration to make 500 million at-home Covid tests available for free*, NBC News (Dec. 21, 2021), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-administration-make-500-million-home-covid-tests-available-free-n1286356>; Press Release, Department of Health and Human Services, *Biden-Harris Administration Requires Insurance Companies and Group Health Plans to Cover the Cost of At-Home COVID-19 Tests, Increasing Access to Free Tests* (Jan. 10, 2022), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2022/01/10/biden-harris-administration-requires-insurance-companies-group-health-plans-to-cover-cost-at-home-covid-19-tests-increasing-access-free-tests.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Lydia DePillis and Eric Umansky, *Here's Why Rapid COVID Tests Are So Expensive and Hard to Find*, ProPublica (Nov. 4, 2021), <https://www.propublica.org/article/heres-why-rapid-covid-tests-are-so-expensive-and-hard-to-find>.

<sup>61</sup> Remarks by President Biden on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic (Sep. 9, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/09/remarks-by-president-biden-on-fighting-the-covid-19-pandemic-3/>.

<sup>62</sup> *Walmart, Kroger Raise Prices of Covid-19 Test Kits*, Wall St. J. (Jan. 5, 2022), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/walmart-kroger-raise-prices-of-covid-19-test-kits-11641320476>.

<sup>63</sup> Molly Kinder, Laura Stateler, & Julia Du, *Windfall profits and deadly risks*, Brookings (Nov. 2020), <https://www.brookings.edu/essay/windfall-profits-and-deadly-risks/>.

1. What is the average wholesale price per unit your company currently pays for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
2. What is the average retail price per unit your company currently charges for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests? How has that price fluctuated during the pandemic?
3. What steps — aside from an agreement with the federal government — has your company taken to keep costs to consumers low for rapid COVID-19 antigen tests?
4. Have you communicated with the federal government about any issues related to obtaining supplies of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests to sell to consumers?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Axler ([adam\\_axler@markey.senate.gov](mailto:adam_axler@markey.senate.gov)) or Ian Jones ([ian\\_jones@markey.senate.gov](mailto:ian_jones@markey.senate.gov)) at 202-224-2742 in my office.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator