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## USA Today Looks at Prescription Drug Industry's Lobbying Efforts

Main Category: [Pharma Industry / Biotech Industry](#)  
Article Date: 28 Apr 2005 - 8:00 PDT

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USA Today on Tuesday examined the "political clout of the pharmaceutical industry," which since 1998 has spent \$758 million on lobbying efforts -- more than any other industry, according to the... [Center for Public Integrity](#). The pharmaceutical industry in 2003 spent \$143 million on lobbying activities. At that time, there were 1,274 registered pharmaceutical lobbyists in Washington, D.C. -- more than two for every member of Congress, *USA Today* reports. Of those, 476 were former federal officials, including 40 former members of Congress. Former Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) earlier this year was named CEO and president of the [Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America](#). According to *USA Today*, Tauzin's move to the private sector is "testament to the industry's power." Prior to taking his position with PhRMA, Tauzin helped pass the Medicare prescription drug benefit as chair of the [House Energy and Commerce Committee](#). Currently, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) -- the "gatekeeper for legislation that comes to the Senate floor" -- is a "key lobbying target" for the industry, *USA Today* reports. During the 2004 election cycle, the drug industry contributed at least \$17 million to federal candidates, including \$1 million to President Bush and \$500,000 to former Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass). Election spending on federal candidates by the pharmaceutical industry favored Republicans by a two-to-one margin. According to *USA Today*, the drug industry "also liberally funds think tanks and patient advocacy groups that don't bear its name but often take its side," such as the [National Patient Advocate Foundation](#). Last month, NPAF member Nancy Davenport-Ennis testified in a Senate hearing on FDA's drug-approval

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## Monthly Feature

### Energy Drinks: Is It Time To Tighten Regulation?



Concerns about energy drinks have been gathering pace, with some groups now calling for them to be more tightly regulated and for greater public awareness of what they contain, their potential side-effects and risk of addiction. Read our [article here...](#)

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- TOP ARTICLE**  
[Avandia \(Rosiglitazone\) To Be Taken Off The Market In Europe 24 Sep 2010](#)  
Avandia (rosiglitazone), and all diabetes medications that contain rosiglitazone will be taken off the market within the next few months, says the European Medicines Agency (EMA) which has recommended taking it off the market...
- [Over 17,000 US Doctors Paid By Drug Companies To Spread Their Message](#)  
19 Oct 2010
- [Novartis To Discontinue Hepatitis And Invasive Candidiasis Drug Developments](#)  
06 Oct 2010
- [Lipitor Recall After Musty Odor Reported - 191,000 Bottles Involved](#)  
08 Oct 2010
- [Lupus Drug Benlysta® \(belimumab\) Priority Review Granted By FDA](#)

process, saying that an "overemphasis on safety" could delay helpful drugs from reaching the market.

### Government Clout

According to *USA Today*, lobbyists for the drug industry "have been very successful" in advocating their position to the government. Recent legislative victories for the pharmaceutical industry include the passage of the new Medicare law, which expands coverage to include prescription drugs while blocking the government from negotiating price discounts; the continuation of the use of company fees to hasten FDA drug-approval processes; and the preservation of a ban on importing lower-cost prescription drugs from Canada and other nations. According to *USA Today*, "The industry's deep inroads into the government are rooted in its dependence on federal decisions." FDA has responsibility over drug marketing and labeling. The government is also a large purchaser of pharmaceutical products for government programs (Drinkard, *USA Today*, 4/26).

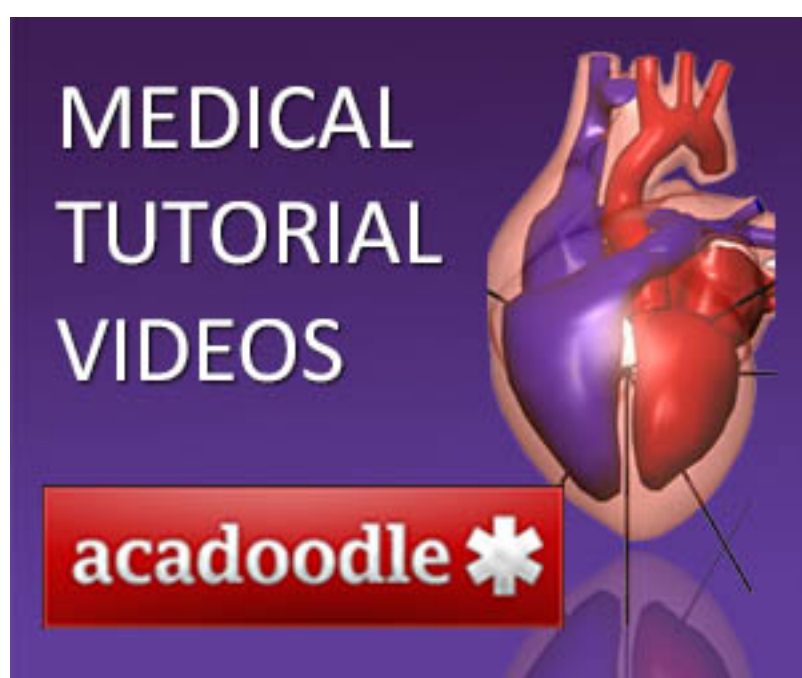
[USA Today](#)

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