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Contact: Kate Titus, Cure CVS (617) 460-0972

***Rhode Island Community Advocates Warn Consumers...***

## **CVS Selling Expired Products**

### **Call on CVS Caremark Corp. to Reform Retail Practices, Respect the Community**

*Providence, Rhode Island* – CVS Caremark, the nation's largest pharmacy chain, came under fire in its own back yard today. Rhode Island health and consumer advocates spoke out against CVS for selling expired products, thus potentially putting customer health and safety at risk. Meanwhile, demonstrations also took place outside CVS stores in 8 other states nationwide over similar issues.

Demonstrators walked the sidewalk outside of a CVS drugstore on Broad Street in Providence, where expired products had been purchased less than a week ago. Announcing findings that CVS has been selling expired goods in many stores in Providence and around the country, community leaders called on CVS to remove all expired products from its stores.

The demonstrators displayed a sampling of expired items, including eggs and mayonnaise, infant formula, children's Tylenol, and other healthcare products, all purchased inside the Broad Street store last Friday. At the time of purchase, the eggs were 9 days past their sell date, and most of the other items had expired 6-8 months earlier.

"This is a serious health concern," said Ivette Luna, of Ocean State Action. "In a time where we have record high unemployment rate and thus yielding a high rate of uninsured we can't afford to have corporations like CVS selling us expired goods -- eggs and mayonnaise, are dangerous when they go bad. The well-being of our youth relies on well balanced nutrition. What sort of message are we sending to our community and our state when we allow companies like CVS to sell infant formula and medicine for kids that are expired well over 6 months! This is not something to play around with." Ms. Luna continued, "As a state we must do all we can to ensure that we fight for a healthy RI – understanding that we ALL suffer when we allow this type of discrepancies to go unanswered."

A recent survey of Greater Providence CVS drugstores found 29% of stores surveyed were selling expired medicines, infant formula or milk. One in six of the local stores surveyed stocked expired infant formula. One in seven of the local stores surveyed offered expired dairy products for sale including milk one week past its sell-by date found at a CVS store in Woonsocket, where the CVS corporate headquarters are located.

### **CVS's Providence Problems Follow National Pattern**

CVS's pattern of selling expired products in nearly a third of Greater Providence stores surveyed matches the company's national pattern. Surveyors recently visited 310 CVS stores operating in 9 states and found expired infant formula, dairy and/or medication for sale at just over 58 percent, or 180 stores surveyed.

CVS stores surveyed in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Detroit, Miami, Orlando, Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, San Diego, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and other cities last year were also found to be selling expired products.

Last June, two Attorneys General – in California and New York – criticized CVS for selling expired products and demanded CVS clean these items from their shelves. In December, New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo launched a lawsuit against CVS for failing to take appropriate action to keep the public safe from expired goods.

Protesters confronted CVS in other cities today, including Chicago, Pittsburg, Atlanta, Indianapolis, and Houston, among others. The local groups share similar concerns about CVS's retail practices and are working together through a national campaign called Cure CVS.

"CVS is a flagship Rhode Island business and has been posting record profits," said Ms. Luna. "It can and should do better than this." She added, "CVS bills itself as a healthcare company. I wonder what CVS definition of "health care" is, providing expired goods? Ultimately, it should not make a profit at the expense of our health and safety."

"I live in this community, right nearby this CVS," said John Prince, of the group Direct Action for Rights and Equality. "What bothers me is that CVS doesn't seem to have any problem taking our money, but seems less concerned about how they treat us in return. Rhode Island subsidizes CVS in many ways. We have a right to expect CVS to respect the community and ensure safe, quality products."

For more information visit [www.CureCVSNow.org](http://www.CureCVSNow.org)

**Cure CVS** is an initiative by Change to Win and partner organizations to reform the drugstore industry, starting with CVS, the country's leading provider of prescription drugs and largest drugstore chain. By joining concerned citizen groups with the six million members of Change to Win unions, Cure CVS aims to ensure that CVS provides equal access across all communities and income levels to its stores and services, offers fair and accurate prices, provides quality products and services, protects customers' privacy and puts quality pharmacy care first.

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