



**NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCT  
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

[nhppa.org](http://nhppa.org)

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## CANADA'S NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCT PROTECTION ASSOCIATION CALLS ON CANADA'S POLITICAL LEADERS TO PROTECT CANADIANS' HEALTH RIGHTS

Ottawa, ON—On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Canada is facing its most important federal election in its history. While elected officials' talking points include: tariffs, taxes, and Trump, the threat to Canadians' health rights has been largely overlooked. Not only is health the most important asset Canadians have, the previous government enacted legislation that put a sizable strain on the natural health products industry and will likely decimate the industry and significantly reduce the natural health options available to Canadians in the near future and for years to come.

A shocking 82% of Canadians rely on natural health products to maintain or improve their health but current legislation not only does not acknowledge this fact, it threatens Canadians' right to access and use natural health products. While the focus has been on the external threats to Canadian sovereignty, elected officials need to address the internal punitive legislation that threatens Canadians' health sovereignty and its vibrant natural health industry.

Says Shawn Buckley, LLB, a lawyer who has been conducting legal advocacy for natural health products (NHPs) for thirty years, and the president of the [Natural Health Product Protection Association \(NHPPA\)](http://nhppa.org): "On the current regulatory trajectory, Canadians' will have fewer and fewer natural options outside of pharmaceutical drugs to manage their health. The natural health products that remain will undoubtedly be priced out of many Canadians' budgets as Health Canada is forcing companies to absorb exorbitant costs, which will then be passed down to consumers, if the manufacturers survive the changes at all."

Health Canada is currently implementing its erroneously labelled "Self-Care Framework." Buckley adds: "It sounds like a spa treatment but don't be fooled: It's anything but good for your health and will undoubtedly hurt Canadians." This government initiative claims to "harmonize" the regulation of natural health products with that of pharmaceutical drugs. But, natural health products are nothing like synthetic pharmaceutical drugs and should not be regulated in the same way. The former have a safe history of use for thousands of years, while most pharmaceuticals have lengthy lists of serious side-effects. Additionally, the businesses manufacturing natural health products lack the massive



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budgets of pharmaceutical companies or the patent protections granted to drug companies that allow them to reap huge profits from their drugs for two decades prior to competing interests entering the marketplace.

“Health Canada claims its changes are to ensure the safety of Canadians, but without access to these products, Canadians’ health is at greater risk than ever as many will be forced to rely on pharmaceutical drugs with pages-long lists of side-effects, some of which include death,” states Buckley.

For years, natural health products were already regulated in Canada under Natural Health Product Regulations that are passed under the Food and Drug Act. These regulations governed, and continue to govern, the safety of natural health products in an appropriate manner for the lower-risk nature of these products. There was no need for the government to slip the new legislation into its budget.

#### Some Historical Background

“In 1997, after the largest consultation in Standing Committee history, the conclusion was simple: Regulating natural health products like chemical drugs is completely inappropriate. The Standing Committee concluded that the government should actually *increase* access to natural health products,” says Buckley.

Buried in the June 2023 **Budget** Bill, “Health Canada quietly added a new definition of a ‘therapeutic product’ into the federal government budget, without proper public vetting, granting themselves sweeping and excessive controls over natural health products (NHPs) and treating them like prescription drugs,” adds Buckley.

These changes made should have been properly reviewed, assessed, and vetted, but they were not. Natural health businesses now face fines of up to **\$5 million per day**—penalties that may be miniscule to pharmaceutical companies but are financially devastating and unsustainable for natural health companies.

With pharmaceutical-style regulations being phased in to the natural health product industry, it means that health food stores, natural health product manufacturers, and even natural health practitioners may be subject to many new fees, fines, and unchecked government powers to seize products, raid stores, or censor claims or product uses.

Unless elected officials entrench Canadians’ right to access and use natural health products into their platforms, natural health products may continue on their current trajectory, which includes:



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- 1) Canadians will lose many natural products they rely on to manage their health.
  - 2) The prices of the remaining products will continue to increase as manufacturers face increased licensing fees and fines.
  - 3) Natural health practitioners may be forced out of practice, as they will no longer have access to the natural health products that are their essential tools in supporting their clients/patients.
  - 4) Many retailers, manufacturers, and natural health practitioners will lose their livelihoods or jobs.
  - 5) There will be additional strain on the already-strained medical system as Canadians may experience impacts of a potentially greater reliance on pharmaceutical drugs.

The Natural Health Product Protection Association (NHPPA) is a federally-incorporated Canadian not-for-profit organization that has been advocating for the protection of natural health products and dietary supplements since 2008. It has been working hard for seventeen years with many wins but is seeking the help of Canadians and elected officials to avoid the devastating trajectory the industry faces, with significant consequences to Canadians' health. The NHPPA publishes a weekly newsletter to help Canadians stay informed regarding the critical issues facing the natural health products at: <https://nhppa.org/subscribe>.

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