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Advocates File Ballot Initiative in Arizona to Improve Patient Care in Dialysis Clinics

9,500 Arizonans Received Dialysis Treatment in 2015

PHOENIX – Dialysis patient advocates filed a ballot initiative for the November 2018 election in Arizona that seeks to improve patient care at the 124 kidney dialysis clinics in the state.

“People with kidney failure need dialysis to stay alive and yet the industry often seems to operate under the radar,” said René Bernal-Mejia, the proponent of the ballot initiative. “As Arizona voters learn what’s wrong with the dialysis industry, I think they’ll support holding the corporations accountable.”

The [Kidney Dialysis Patient Protection Act](#) would limit dialysis corporations’ revenues to 15 percent above the amount they spend on patient care and require annual inspections of dialysis clinics. Organizers must collect the signatures of 150,642 Arizona voters and submit them to election officials by July 5.

The two largest dialysis corporations – DaVita and Fresenius – made a combined \$3.9 billion in profits from their dialysis operations in the United States in 2016. These same dialysis companies marked up the actual cost of care by 350 percent that year. They operate 84 percent of the dialysis clinics in Arizona.

According to Medicare, 81 percent of the licensed dialysis clinics in Arizona are owned by DaVita or Fresenius. In 2015, the U.S. Renal Data System reported more than 9,500 Arizonans received treatment at dialysis clinics.

Advocates filed a similar ballot initiative in California and Ohio for the November 2018 election, and expect to submit voter signatures to California election officials by April 11, and to Ohio election officials by early July.

Dialysis removes a patient’s blood, cleans it, and then puts it back in his or her body. Patients must go to a dialysis clinic three days a week for treatment, with each session lasting three to four hours.

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Paid for by Arizonans for Kidney Dialysis Patient Protection. Not authorized by any candidate.