Hillary Clinton calls for U.S. probe of 5,000% drug price hike

By Chris Isidore and Robert Mclean @CNNMoney
Drug's crazy price hike sparks debate

Hillary Clinton has stepped up her attacks on the company that hiked the price of a pill used by AIDS and cancer patients more than 5,000% -- calling for a government investigation.

Clinton wrote to the Food and Drug Administration and Federal Trade Commission Monday asking that they look at Turing Pharmaceutical's pricing of Daraprim.

Turing caught flack for raising the price of Daraprim to $750 a pill from $13.50 after it acquired the drug.

The drug is used to treat a parasite known as toxoplasmosis. Turing has said it will use the profits from the higher price to develop a new generation of treatments.

But critics, including Clinton and her Democratic opponent Bernie Sanders, have charged that the company is being greedy.

Clinton asked the FDA to allow importation of low price versions of the drug from the U.K. and Canada.

"Patients who rely on this treatment should not have their health and lives put at risk because of an unnecessary anti-competitive market, and the FDA
should act through all of its available authorities to remedy this situation as soon as feasible," she wrote in the FDA letter, which was first reported by Reuters.

She acknowledged that the FTC has limited authority to act in the matter but asks the agency to investigate Turing for restricting distribution of the drug. Turing CEO Martin Shkreli and the company's spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Clinton's letters.

The letters are not the first comment by Clinton about Turing. Her tweet last month accusing the company of "price gouging" helped send the price of biotech stocks tumbling.

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