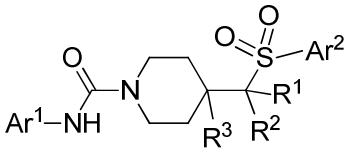
**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

**1**. A compound having formula (I):



(I)

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein

$Ar^1$ is a 5- to 6-membered heteroaryl having at least one nitrogen atom ring member; and which is optionally substituted with from 1-3 $R^a$;

$Ar^2$ is a 5- to 10-membered aryl or heteroaryl which is optionally substituted with from 1-5 $R^b$;

$R^1$ and $R^2$ are each independently a member selected from the group consisting of H, F, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ deuteroalkyl, and $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkyl; or optionally $R^1$ and $R^2$ can be combined to form a $C_3$- to $C_5$ carbocyclic ring which is optionally substituted with one or two F;

$R^3$ is a member selected from the group consisting of H, F, OH and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl;

each $R^a$ is independently selected from the group consisting of halo, CN, hydroxyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ hydroxyalkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkoxy, $-COR^{a1}$, $-CO_2R^{a1}$, $-SO_2R^{a1}$, $-SO_2NR^{a1}R^{a2}$, and $-CONR^{a1}R^{a2}$, wherein each $R^{a1}$ and $R^{a2}$ is independently selected from the group consisting of H and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl or optionally $R^{a1}$ and $R^{a2}$ when attached to a nitrogen atom are combined to form a 4- to 6-membered ring; or optionally, two $R^a$ substituents on adjacent ring members are combined to form a 5- or 6-membered ring having 0, 1 or 2 ring members selected from O, N and S; and

each $R^b$ is independently selected from the group consisting of halo, CN, hydroxyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ deuteroalkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkoxy, $C_3$-$C_6$ cycloalkyl, $-NR^{b1}R^{b2}$, $-COR^{b1}$, $-CO_2R^{b1}$, $-SO_2R^{b1}$, $-SO_2NR^{b1}R^{b2}$, $–CONR^{b1}R^{b2}$, and a 5- or 6-membered heteroaryl which is optionally substituted with $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, and wherein each $R^{b1}$ and $R^{b2}$ is independently selected from the group consisting of H and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl or optionally $R^{b1}$ and $R^{b2}$ when attached to a nitrogen atom are combined to form a 4- to 6- membered ring; or optionally, two $R^b$ substituents on adjacent ring members are combined to form a 5- or 6-membered ring having 0, 1 or 2 ring members selected from O, N and S.

**2**. A compound of claim **1**, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein $Ar^1$ is selected from the group consisting of pyridyl, pyridazinyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, 1,2,3-thiadiazolyl, isothiazolyl, and thiazolyl, each of which is optionally substituted with from 1 to 2 $R^a$.

**3**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $Ar^2$ is selected from the group consisting of phenyl, pyridyl and pyrazolyl, each of which is optionally substituted with from 1 to 3 $R^b$.

**4**. A compound of claim **3**, wherein $R^b$ is selected from the group consisting of halo, CN, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy and $C_1$-$C_4$ haloalkoxy.

**5**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $R^1$ is selected from the group consisting of H, F and $CH_3$.

**6**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $R^2$ is selected from the group consisting of H, F and $CH_3$.

**7**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $R^1$ and $R^2$ taken together with the carbon atom to which each is attached form a cyclopropane or cyclobutane ring.

**8**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $R^1$ and $R^2$ are not the same and at least one of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is selected from F and $CH_3$.

**9**. A compound of claim **8**, wherein the carbon atom bearing $R^1$ and $R^2$ has a R configuration.

**10**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $R^3$ is H or F.

**11**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $Ar^1$ is 4-pyridinyl and $Ar^2$ is phenyl, optionally substituted with from 1 to 3 $R^b$.

**12**. A compound of claim **11**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is F.

**13**. A compound of claim **11**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is $CH_3$.

**14**. A compound of claim **11**, wherein $R^3$ is H, $R^1$ is $CH_3$ and $R^2$ is F.

**15**. A compound of claim **14**, wherein the carbon atom bearing $R^1$ and $R^2$ has a stereochemical R-configuration.

**16**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $Ar^1$ is 4-pyridazinyl and $Ar^2$ is phenyl, optionally substituted with from 1 to 3 $R^b$.

**17**. A compound of claim **16**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is F.

**18**. A compound of claim **16**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is $CH_3$.

**19**. A compound of claim **16**, wherein $R^3$ is H, $R^1$ is $CH_3$ and $R^2$ is F.

**20**. A compound of claim **19**, wherein the carbon atom bearing $R^1$ and $R^2$ has a stereochemical R-configuration.

**21**. A compound of claim **1**, wherein $Ar^1$ is selected from the group consisting of 1,2,3-thiadiazol-5-yl, isothiazol-5-yl, and thiazol-5-yl, each of which is optionally substituted with one $R^a$.

**22**. A compound of claim **21**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is F.

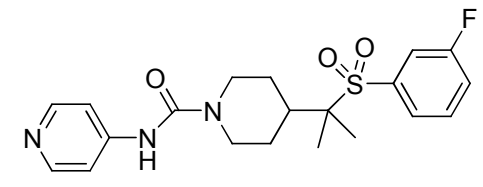
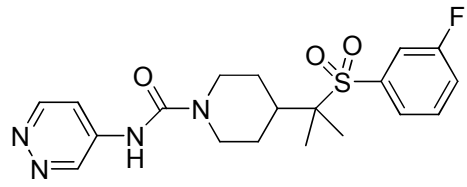
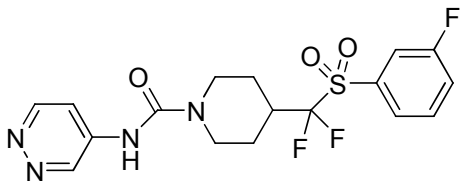
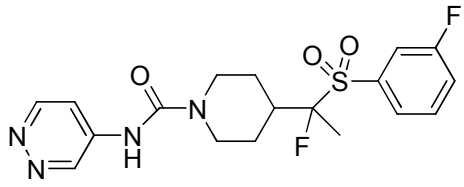
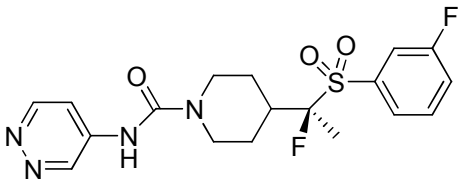
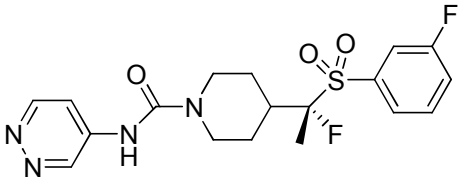
**23**. A compound of claim **21**, wherein $R^3$ is H, and each of $R^1$ and $R^2$ is $CH_3$.

**24**. A compound of claim **21**, wherein $R^3$ is H, $R^1$ is $CH_3$ and $R^2$ is F.

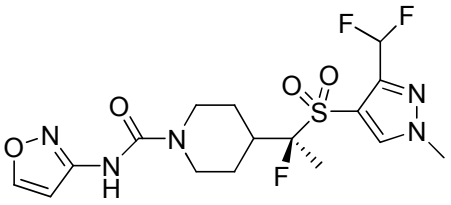
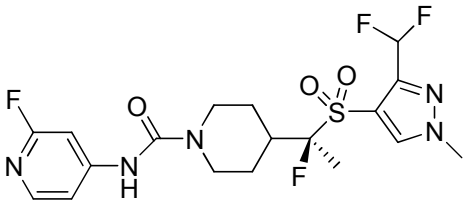
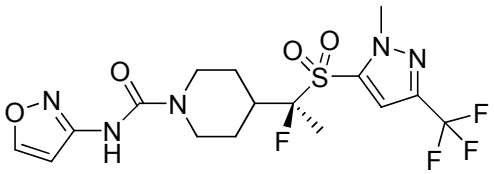
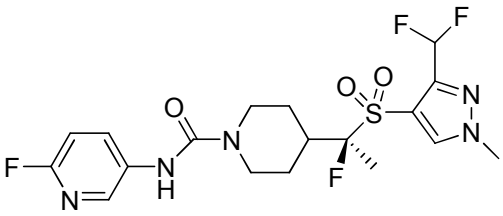
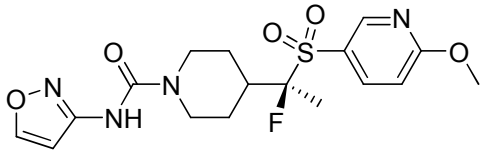
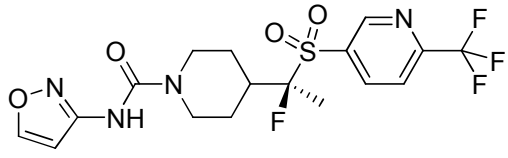
**25**. A compound of claim **24**, wherein the carbon atom bearing $R^1$ and $R^2$ has a stereochemical R-configuration.

**26**. A compound of claim **1**, selected from Table 2 and having an activity level of ++ or +++.

**27**. A compound of claim **1**, selected from the group consisting of






and

.

**28**. A compound of claim **1**, selected from the group consisting of






and

.

**29**. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of any one of claims **1- 28** and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

**30**. A compound of any of claims **1-28** for use in treating dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), or a cardiac disorder having a pathophysiological feature of DCM, such as disorders with systolic dysfunction or a reduction in systolic reserve.

**31**. A compound of any of claims **1-28,** or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof for use in treating a disease or disorder selected from the group consisting of

systolic dysfunction, diastolic dysfunction, HFrEF, HFpEF, chronic heart failure and acute heart failure.

**32**. A compound of claim **31**, wherein said compound is to be administered in an IV formulation for the treatment of acute heart failure.

**33**. A compound of any of claims **1-28**, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof for use in treating a disease or disorder characterized by left ventricular systolic dysfunction or symptoms or reduced exercise capacity due to systolic dysfunction; in conjunction with therapies aimed at treating heart failure.

**34**. A compound of any of claims **1-28,** or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof for use in treating dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), or a cardiac disorder having a pathophysiological feature associated with DCM, wherein the compound is to be combined with therapies that retard the progression of heart failure by down-regulating neurohormonal stimulation of the heart and attempt to prevent cardiac remodeling (*e.g.,* ACE inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), β-blockers, aldosterone receptor antagonists, or neural endopeptidase inhibitors); therapies that improve cardiac function by stimulating cardiac contractility (*e.g.*, positive inotropic agents, such as the β-adrenergic agonist dobutamine or the phosphodiesterase inhibitor milrinone); and therapies that reduce cardiac preload (*e.g.*, diuretics, such as furosemide) or afterload (vasodilators of any class, including but not limited to calcium channel blockers, phosphodiesterase inhibitors, endothelin receptor antagonists, renin inhibitors, or smooth muscle myosin modulators).

**35.** A compound of claim **34**, wherein said compound is to be administered in combination with a beta-blocker.