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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

CONGRESSIONAL

CBO Releases Updated AHCA Score

Yesterday, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its [updated score](#) of the American Health Care Act (AHCA), legislation passed earlier this month to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The CBO report indicates that over the ten year budget window, the AHCA would reduce the deficit by \$119 billion, while 23 million fewer individuals would be insured. The report also stated that while premiums would decrease by 10 to 30 percent in states that apply for waivers, lower-income and older individuals would be subject to large premium increases. The score will now be used by the Senate Parliamentarian to determine which

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

Receive the latest updates from CMS on implementation of the Quality Payment Program by signing up for updates at the bottom of their [Resources page](#).

UPCOMING HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

The House and Senate will be in Recess for the Memorial Day holiday next week. The

provisions will be allowed under budget rules in the Senate version of the bill currently being negotiated.

House Passes VA Health Care Legislation

This week the House passed several Veterans Affairs (VA) bills that would support the VA health care system to provide greater accountability and access to veterans.

- [VA Scheduling Accountability Act](#) (H.R. 467)
- [Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act](#) (H.R. 2288)
- [To amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of adult day health care services for veterans](#) (H.R. 1005)
- [No Hero Left Untreated Act](#) (H.R. 1162)
- [VA Prescription Data Accountability Act](#) (H.R. 1545)
- [To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit certain reports relating to medical evidence submitted in support of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary](#) (H.R. 1725)

Ways and Means Passes Legislation to Support AHCA

Yesterday, the House Ways and Means Committee passed three bills in an effort to supplement the House Republican ACA replacement strategy along with the AHCA.

- [Veterans Equal Treatment Ensures Relief and Access Now \(VETERAN\) Act](#) (H.R. 2372)
- [To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the premium tax credit with respect to unsubsidized COBRA continuation coverage](#) (H.R. 2579)
- [Verify First Act](#) (H.R. 2581)

ADMINISTRATION

Senate will return on Monday, June 5 and House will return on Tuesday, June 6.

WEEKLY FUN FACT

Did you know...

Memorial Day was originally called "Decoration Day."

To honor the deceased, soldiers would decorate graves of their fallen comrades with flowers, flags and wreaths. Hence Decoration Day. Although Memorial Day became its official title in the 1880s, the holiday wouldn't legally become Memorial Day until 1967.

Click [here](#) to find more fun facts about Memorial Day.

President Releases 2018 Budget

Tuesday, the President released his [FY 2018 Budget](#) for Federal Government Agencies. For the [Department of Health and Human Services](#), the budget includes a \$610 billion cut to Medicaid over the next ten years through caps to federal funding, a \$6 billion decrease in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and a \$1.3 billion cut to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The budget document is a blueprint of the Administration's priorities, and cannot become law unless taken up by Congress in appropriation legislation. Many legislators in Congress have already indicated concerns with some of the cuts included in the President's budget.

Lawsuit on CSR Payments Further Delayed

On Monday, both the House of Representatives and the Trump Administration requested another 90-day delay in the House v. Price lawsuit challenging the Administration's payment of cost-sharing reduction (CSR) payments to insurers for participation in the health care exchanges. Up to this point, both the Obama and Trump Administrations have made these payments, but the future of the CSRs is unclear. Health insurers have until June 21 to submit their bids for the 2018 exchanges.

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