

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** July 5, 2017

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### **CBO Scores Senate Health Care Bill while Vote is Delayed**

Last Monday, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its [score](#) of the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA), the Senate's version of an Affordable Care Act (ACA) replacement plan. The score indicated that BCRA would save \$321 billion over a decade, but would leave an additional 22 million individuals uninsured by 2026 compared to current law. This was an increase in savings compared to the House version of the bill and a slight decrease in the amount of uninsured (the House version was predicted to leave an additional 23 million uninsured). CBO subsequently [reported](#) its expectations that

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

Along with its 2018 Quality Payment Program proposed rule, CMS released a [fact sheet](#) comparing the 2017 final rule to the proposed 2018 changes.

### UPCOMING HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

**The House and the Senate are in recess this week for the July 4th holiday. The**

under BCRA, Medicaid spending would be 35 percent lower in 2036 compared to current law.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) had set a deadline of June 30 to vote on the measure, but after concerns from both Conservatives and Moderates, the vote was postponed until sometime after their return from July 4th recess. At least 6 Senate Republicans voiced opposition to the current legislation, with many others remaining undecided. The Senate continues to negotiate this week to find a compromise that can reach the votes needed - they can only lose 2 of their 52 Republican Senators to pass.

### **House E&C Health Subcommittee Passes Public Health Bills**

On Thursday, the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee passed four bipartisan public health bills to identify and treat human trafficking victims, establish grant programs for military-civilian partnerships in trauma care, develop and maintain a firefighter cancer registry, and reauthorize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) oral health promotion and disease prevention programs.

- [Stop, Observe, Ask and Respond \(SOAR\) to Health and Wellness Act \(H.R. 767\)](#)
- [Military Injury Surgical Systems Integrated Operationally Nationwide to achieve ZERO Preventable Deaths \(MISSION ZERO\) Act \(H.R. 880\)](#)
- [Firefighter Cancer Registry Act \(H.R. 931\)](#)
- [Action for Dental Health Act \(H.R. 2422\)](#)

These bills will now go to the full Committee.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **2018 Quality Payment Program Proposed Rule**

**Senate returns Monday, July 10 and the House returns Tuesday, July 11.**

#### **WEEKLY FUN FACT**

What was the name of the first newspaper to print the Declaration of Independence?

The answer can be found [here](#).

## Released

On June 20, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released its [2018 Quality Payment Program proposed rule](#), implementing the second performance year of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA). The [proposal](#) maintains many of the provisions included in the 2017 final rule establishing the programs to begin the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) and Advanced Alternative Payment Models (AAPMs). Major new provisions for 2018 that weren't established in last year's rule include application of virtual groups, facility based measurement, improvement scoring, flexibilities for small businesses and more defined criteria and submission mechanisms for the All-payer combination option beginning in performance year 2019. CMS will accept comments on the proposal through August 21, 2017.

## 2018 ESRD PPS Proposed Rule Released

On Thursday, CMS released the [2018 End-Stage Renal Disease \(ESRD\) Prospective Payment System \(PPS\) proposed rule](#). The [proposal](#) estimates a .8% increase in payment for dialysis facilities in 2018 and requests comment on including individuals with acute kidney injury in the ESRD Quality Improvement Program (QIP), among other updates. Comments are due August 28, 2017.

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