

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** October 31, 2017

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### Senate Finance Release Extenders Details

Last Thursday, the Senate Finance Committee released their Medicare and other health extender [discussion draft](#) which contains many of the usual extenders including; extension of work geographic practice expense index (GPCI) floor, permanent repeal of the therapy cap, and more. The [draft legislation](#) does not include offsets though.

#### House to Vote on CHIP and IPAB This Week

Last week, the House announced that they will be voting this week on [legislation](#) to extend funding to the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). CHIP expired Sept 30 and although it is a

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

A reminder on where to find all of your MACRA resources: [The CMS Quality Payment Program Resource Library](#).

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

Senate HELP Committee  
10/31 at 2:30pm: Full Committee Hearing on [Implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act: Achieving](#)

bipartisan issue, it will more than likely be a partisan vote on the House floor due to disagreement between the Republicans and Democrats on how to pay for the bill.

On the same day, it also announced that the House will also be voting on [H.R. 849, Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act of 2017](#) this week. This legislation repeals the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), which was created in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to control per-capita spending in Medicare.

### **House Passes Budget Resolution and Focuses on Tax**

Last Thursday, the House narrowly passed their 2018 budget resolution by a vote of [216-212](#), now allowing them to pass tax reform by only needing 51 votes in the Senate. It's an uphill battle now as House Leadership drafts a bill to gain enough Republican support to pass the House. Ways & Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) says a draft bill will be released tomorrow and they will begin markup the week after.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Trump Declares Opioid Emergency**

Last Thursday, President Trump [declared](#) the opioid crisis a public health emergency. The declaration doesn't include additional funds though.

### **ACA Plan Window Shopping Opens**

Last week, individuals gained access to [preview their 2018 exchange plans and prices](#) ahead of open enrollment that starts tomorrow (Nov 1) and goes until Dec 15.

### **CMS Releases Final ESRD Rule**

Last Friday, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released their [End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System Final Rule](#). The rule finalized a 0.5 % pay increase for

[the Promise of Health Information Technology](#)

### **House Veterans' Affairs Committee**

11/02 at 10am: Full Committee Markup on [Pending Legislation](#)

## **WEEKLY TRIVIA**

### **True/False**

London is typically believed to be the birthplace of Halloween?

The first Jack O'Lanterns were actually made from turnips?

According to tradition, if a person wears his or her clothes inside out and then walks backwards on Halloween, he or she will see a witch at midnight?

Click [here](#) to find the answers.



dialysis facilities in 2018 and a 0.7% increase to hospital-based facilities.

### **CMS Proposes ACA Changes**

On Oct 27, CMS released their [ACA Notice of Benefit Payments and Parameters Proposed Rule for 2019](#). The administration proposed to give states new flexibility to set essential health benefits, loosen requirements for small business exchanges, increase the threshold for rate review, eliminate standardized plan options and the “meaningful difference” standard, and more. Comments are due Nov 27.

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### **HOOPER, LUNDY & BOOKMAN, P.C.**

#### **Government Relations and Public Policy**

401 9th Street NW, Suite 550 Washington, DC 20004 | Telephone 202.580.7700

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