

HLB Weekly Newsletter

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

CONGRESSIONAL

Energy and Commerce Passes Volunteer Health Provider Liability

Yesterday, the Energy and Commerce Committee passed the [Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act \(H.R. 1876\)](#), bipartisan legislation which would protect health care providers from liability when volunteering services during federal declared disasters. This legislation now goes to the full house for a vote.

ADMINISTRATION

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

For the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), [groups](#) have until March 16, and individual providers until March 31 to submit data for [2017 reporting](#).

HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

Senate Finance Committee
2/15 at 9:00am: Full Committee

Administration Releases FY 2019 Budget Proposal

This past Monday, the White House released the President's [FY 2019 Budget Proposal](#) for Federal Government programs. While the budget is not binding, with most appropriations and policy changes needing Congressional approval, the budget outlines the Administration's priorities for the year and initiatives agencies may take up within their own authority. The [Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\) Budget](#) includes cuts to public health programs, changes to Medicaid, increased funding to combat the opioid crisis and many changes to the Medicare program. Medicare changes proposed include reforms to Graduate Medical Education and 340B, cuts to payments for uncompensated care and reduced coverage of bad debt, and calls for a unified post-acute care payment system in 2024. Separately, Congressional Appropriators have begun the process of negotiating funding bills based on the updated budget caps from last week's budget deal.

CMS Actuaries Project Health Expenditures

Yesterday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Office of the Actuary released the [projected national health expenditures for 2017-2026](#). The [report](#) shows national health expenditure growth is expected to average 5.5 percent annually over the next ten years and the health share of GDP will rise from 17.9 percent in 2016 to 19.7 percent by 2026.

hearing on [HHS Budget Request](#).

House Judiciary Committee

2/15 at 9:00am: Committee hearing on [The Effect of Sanctuary City Policies on the Ability to Combat the Opioid Epidemic](#).

House Education and Workforce Committee

2/15 at 10:00am: Joint subcommittee hearing on [The Opioids Epidemic: Implications for America's Workplaces](#).

House Energy and Commerce

2/15 at 12:30pm: Health Subcommittee hearing on [Oversight of the Department of the Department of Health and Human Services](#).

WEEKLY TRIVIA

Which President has the most national parks named in his honor?

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

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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