

EDITION: March 14, 2018

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy



CONGRESSIONAL

Right to Try Legislation Fails in House

On Tuesday, the House of Representatives failed to pass the [Right to Try Act \(H.R. 878\)](#) by a vote of 259-140, legislation that would allow terminally ill patients to have access to experimental medicines that have not yet been approved by the FDA. The House was attempting to quickly pass the legislation under suspension of the rules that would require a two thirds vote which it did not receive after concerns from patient advocacy organizations and some Democrats that the legislation may provide false hope instead of helping patients. [Similar legislation](#) passed under unanimous consent in the

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

[House Appropriations Committee](#)

Senate in August. House leadership and sponsors of the legislation have indicated they now will try to pass the legislation under regular order or by attaching it to a larger legislative vehicle in the future.

ADMINISTRATION

New Administrative Health Appointments

On Friday, the Administration [appointed](#) two new individuals to serve at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Elizabeth Darling will serve as the Commissioner on Children, Youth, and Families and Judith Stecker will serve as Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services (Public Affairs). Additionally, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) James Bailey as the new Medicare Pharmaceutical and Technology Ombudsman, a position established in the 21st Century Cures Act that will "receive, and look into, concerns and questions from pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, diagnostic product manufacturers and other stakeholders regarding Medicare coverage, coding, and payment for products already covered or for which coverage is being sought".

3/15 at 10:00am: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies [hearing](#) on FY19 Budget for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Senate HELP Committee

3/15 at 10:00am: Full Committee [hearing](#) on Perspectives on the 340B Drug Pricing Program.

House Education & Workforce Committee

3/20 at 10:00am: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions [hearing](#) on Expanding Affordable Health Care Options: Examining the Department of Labor's Proposed Rule on Association Health Plans.

Senate Finance Committee

3/20 at 10:00am: Full Committee [hearing](#) to Consider the Nominations of John J. Bartrum, of Indiana, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services and Lynn A. Johnson, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Family Support, Department of Health and Human Services

WEEKLY TRIVIA

True/False

Congress has the "power of the purse" and must approve all government

spending and appropriate
the amount of money to
be spent?

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

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