

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** June 21, 2018

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*



### CONGRESSIONAL

#### Opioid Legislation Moving Through Congress

This week, the House of Representatives continued to pass separate bills to address the opioid epidemic (bills passed on [June 19](#), [June 20](#)). The House will continue passing individual opioid bills through the remainder of this week and is expected to vote on the comprehensive [Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment \(SUPPORT\) for Patients and Communities Act \(H.R. 6\)](#) on Friday with the intention of sending it over to the Senate for a vote. It remains uncertain if the Senate will take up this measure or pursue their own bills from Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) and Finance

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

The Quality Payment Program (QPP) [lookup tool](#) now includes 2018 MIPS Eligibility and Predictive Qualifying APM Participant Data.

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

#### House Ways and Means Committee

6/21 at 9:00am: Full Committee [markup](#) of legislation to include

Committees. The Senate may also want to use different offsets than the House including the [Creating and Restoring Equal Access To Equivalent Samples \(CREATES\) Act \(S. 974\)](#), passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The CREATES Act would help generic drugs move more quickly onto the market by not allowing companies to block samples for development.

### **June MedPAC Report to Congress Released**

Last Friday, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) released their [June 2018 Report to Congress](#). The [report](#) includes the review and recommendations from MedPAC related to the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program, a unified prospective payment system for post-acute care, issues related to Accountable Care Organizations, managed care plans for dual-eligibles, and coverage policies on low-value care, among other items.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Labor Releases Association Health Plan Final Rule**

On Tuesday, the Department of Labor (DOL) released its [Association Health Plan \(AHP\) Final Rule](#). The rule will expand AHPs by allowing small employers and sole proprietors to organize and join. Under this rule, plans could be organized across state lines. Additionally, provisions on non-discrimination were upheld in the rule, but it does not restrict ratings based on non-health factors. New rules will be effective for fully-insured AHPs September 1, 2018, existing self-insured January 1, 2019 and new self insured April 1, 2019.

### **CMS Releases RFI on Physician Self Referral**

On Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) related to questions on the burden of physician self referral

the Reducing Drug Waste Act of 2018"; H.R. 6138, the Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment Transparency Act of 2018"; H.R. 4952, Directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study and submit a report on the effect of the inclusion of quality increases in the determination of blended benchmark amounts under part C of the Medicare Program; etc.

### **Senate Finance Committee**

**6/26 at 9:30am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on Prescription Drug Affordability and Innovation: Addressing Challenges in Today's Market.

### **House Veterans'**

### **Affairs Committee**

**6/26 at 10:00am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on VA Electronic Health Record Modernization: The Beginning of the Beginning.

### **Senate HELP Committee**

**6/27 at 10:00am:** Full Committee [hearing](#) on How to Reduce Health Care Costs: Understanding the Cost of Health Care in America.

## **WEEKLY TRIVIA**

**Who was the first Hispanic American to Chair a committee in the House of Representatives?**

**Click here to find the answer.**

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laws, particularly in alternative payment models. CMS is seeking feedback on the structure of alternative pay model arrangements and the need for revisions or additions to the exceptions to the law. There are also specific questions related to Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs). Comments will be accepted through August 24.

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