

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** September 28, 2018

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

CONGRESSIONAL

Drug Pricing & Pandemic Bills Pass House

On Tuesday, the House passed three bipartisan bills addressing drug pricing and pandemic preparedness. [The Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act \(S. 2554\)](#), and the [Know the Lowest Price Act \(S. 2553\)](#), prohibit gag clauses that prevent pharmacists from telling customers whether they could save money by buying prescription drugs out-of-pocket rather than using their health insurance. S. 2553 bars this practice in Medicare Advantage and Part D plans, while S. 2554 pertains to private health plans. Both of these bills have already been passed by the Senate and have the support of the President.

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMS has [announced](#) an update to the 2017 Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Performance Feedback and adjustments based on errors found from the targeted review process. The updated feedback and adjustments have been made as of September 13. To offer clinicians additional to to review their performance feedback, CMS is extending the targeted review deadline

Additionally, [the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2018 \(H.R. 6378\)](#), provides authority for preparedness and response that currently expires on September 30. The legislation provides funding for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority. This legislation now goes to the Senate.

House Passes Funding Bill

On Wednesday, the House voted 361-61 to pass the conferenced spending bill, [Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act \(H.R. 6157\)](#), which includes a full year of funding for those Departments and an extension of funding for other agencies through December 7, 2018. The President has indicated he will sign the bill before funding runs out on September 30.

House Passes Opioid Agreement

Today, the House passed the updated opioid legislative agreement, the [SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act \(H.R. 6\)](#) by a vote of 393-8. The Senate is expected to take up the legislation in the coming weeks and the President has indicated his support to sign the legislation when it gets to his desk.

ADMINISTRATION

CMS Released Regulatory Relief Proposed Rule

This Week, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) released a report titled; "[Medicare Advantage Appeal Outcomes and Audit Findings Raise Concerns About Service and Payment Denials.](#)" The report indicates concerns related to denials of care and payment in Medicare Advantage.

to October 15, 2018.

HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

Senate HELP Committee

10/3 at 2:30pm: Subcommittee on Children and Families [hearing](#) on Rare Diseases: Expediting Treatments for Patients.

WEEKLY TRIVIA

Who established the practice of planting commemorative trees on White House grounds which now contributes to the fall foliage?

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

Government Relations and Public Policy

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