

HLB Weekly Newsletter

[View this email in your browser](#)**EDITION:** October 5, 2018

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

Your weekly dose of health care policy

NOTE: Through October, this update will only be sent as new information becomes available.

CONGRESSIONAL

Opioid Bill Sent to President for Signature

On Wednesday, the Senate passed the [SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act \(H.R. 6\)](#), legislation combating the opioid epidemic by a vote of 98-1. After months of work in both the House and the Senate, this legislation now goes to the President who is expected to sign it into law. The final [legislation](#) includes provisions to lift Medicaid restrictions on payment for inpatient addiction treatment, expand access to medication-assisted treatment, expands telehealth, and seeks to increase access to providers in mental health underserved

MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMS will host a webinar on October 10 to review the 2017 Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Performance Feedback reports. Register [here](#).

HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

The House is in recess until November 13.

areas.

Fall Outlook and Lame Duck

The House of Representatives has adjourned until after the November elections, with the Senate to follow after completing business over the next few weeks. Election predictions show it more likely than before that at least one chamber, if not both, has the potential to flip to a Democratic majority for the 116th Congress. The outcome of the elections could mean a potential "active" lame duck period in November and December when many bills may be voted on before the Democrats take over in January. It also has implications for a government spending fight for certain agencies that are set to expire on December 7.

For those interested in race-by-race predictions of the most competitive seats across the country by political analyst Charlie Cook, click [here](#) for House races and [here](#) for Senate races.

ADMINISTRATION

CMS Updates LCD Process in Manual

On Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services (CMS) [released](#) an update to their Program Integrity Manual to address the Local Coverage Determination (LCD) process. These changes come as the agency implements the 21st Century Cures Act Passed last year. Changes include opening advisory meetings to the public, including various stakeholder perspectives in the process, and summarizing evidence on decisions.

WEEKLY TRIVIA

Which President nominated the most Supreme Court Justices?

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

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