

HLB Weekly Newsletter

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**EDITION:** October 25, 2017



## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & PUBLIC POLICY

*Your weekly dose of health care policy*

### CONGRESSIONAL

#### Senators Alexander and Murray Release ACA Stabilization Legislation

Last Thursday, Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced bipartisan [legislation](#), with 24 original cosponsors from both parties to help stabilize the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The bill extends cost sharing reduction (CSR) payments for the next two years, along with giving new flexibility for states. Although the bill has enough support to be filibuster-proof, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) stated that he won't bring the legislation to the Senate floor for a vote, until he knows if the President would sign it. President Trump hasn't provided a clear indication yet, and is

### MACRA HIGHLIGHTS

CMS is hosting a MACRA episode-based cost measures field testing national provider webinar on Oct 30 (12:00-1:30pm ET).

To participate, register [here](#).

### HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

House Veterans' Affairs Committee

keeping his focus on getting tax reform done.

### **Finance and Ways & Means Release ACA Stabilization Legislation**

Yesterday, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and House Ways & Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) announced their [bicameral agreement](#) to stabilize the ACA. Their legislation would fund CSRs through 2019 with pro-life protections, remove the individual mandate for 4 years, remove the employer mandate retroactively for 2 years and expand health savings accounts. They plan to release full legislative text in the coming days.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **CMS Responds to California Wildfires**

On Oct 19, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) that they were taking immediate steps and monitoring conditions in support of California residents who were displaced and recovering from the wildfires devastating the state. On Oct. 15, Acting Health and Human Services Secretary Eric Hargan declared a public health emergency (PHE) in the state of California retroactive to Oct. 8, 2017. The PHE allows CMS to waive or modify certain Medicare, Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) requirements if necessary to provide health services.

10/24 at 10:00am: Full Committee hearing on [various VA health bills.](#)

### **House Energy and Commerce Committee**

10/25 at 10:00am: Oversight & Investigations Subcommittee hearing on [Federal Efforts to Combat the Opioid Crisis: A Status Update on CARA and Other Initiatives.](#)

### **House Appropriations Committee**

10/25 at 10:00am: Labor, HHS Subcommittee hearing on [Down Syndrome: Update on the State of the Science and Potential for Discoveries Across Other Major Diseases.](#)

### **Senate Special Aging Committee**

10/25 at 2:30pm: Full Committee Hearing on [Working and Aging with Disabilities: From School to Retirement](#)

### **Senate HELP Committee**

10/31 at 2:30pm: Full Committee Hearing on [Implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act: Achieving the Promise of Health Information Technology](#)

### **WEEKLY FUN FACT**

Which country has successfully

implemented  
healthcare provisions  
for every citizen since  
the 1960s?

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

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