

**EDITION:** October 1, 2021



## COVID-19 Resources

[HLB COVID-19 Resource Center](#)

## Congressional

### **Congress Passes Temporary Government Funding**

On September 30, right before the funding deadline, Congress passed and the President signed a continuing resolution (CR) which funds the government until December 3. The legislation also provides \$6.3 billion for Afghan resettlement and \$29 billion in disaster aide. Passage of a clean CR came after weeks of negotiation of whether or not to include an increase of the debt ceiling in funding legislation. Ultimately, Democrats did not have any Republican votes in the Senate to pass the debt ceiling in this funding package. The debt ceiling will need to be addressed by October 18.

### **Budget Reconciliation Process Continues**

Since passing their budget resolution in August, Congressional Committees have been working on legislation based on the \$3.5 trillion instructions. The House Committees sent their framework to the Budget Committee, but the Senate has not. Democrats in both chambers have no wiggle room to lose any votes for passage and are facing increasing clashes between progressives and moderates in their own party surrounding overall cost and policy, including drug pricing provisions.

We have a long fall ahead with Congress needing to negotiate a way forward and pass an increase in the debt ceiling, the bipartisan infrastructure bill, reconciliation, and of course in 9

## UPCOMING HEALTH CARE ACTIVITIES ON THE HILL

**There are no health care mark-ups or hearings scheduled at this time.**

10/7-10/8: MedPAC [October Public Meeting](#)

weeks, a bill to fund the government *again*.

## Administration

### Surprise Billing Part II Rule Released

On September 30, Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Labor, and Treasury released an [interim final rule](#) (IFR) with comment period as Part II of their rulemaking on surprise billing passed under the No Surprises Act. This [IFR](#) implements the independent dispute resolution (IDR) process to resolve payment disputes between providers and payers. The rule establishes certified independent dispute resolution entities that will be [certified](#) on a rolling basis. The rule will go into effect on January 1, 2022 and has a 60 day comment period.

### Insulin & Epinephrine Rule Rescinded

On September 30, HHS released a [rescission of regulations](#) final rule on the Implementation of Executive Order on Access to Affordable Life-Saving Medications impacting insulin and epinephrine after previous delay. The rule would have required community health centers to pass discounts on these drugs to the consumer.

### Interoperability Enforcement Action Delayed

On September 15, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released [FAQs](#) indicating it would not take enforcement action against payers for the payer-to-payer data exchange provision of the May 2020 Interoperability and Patient Access final rule until future rulemaking is finalized.

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## HOOPER, LUNDY & BOOKMAN, P.C.

### Government Relations and Public Policy

401 9th Street NW, Suite 550 Washington, DC 20004 | Telephone 202.580.7700

[www.health-law.com](http://www.health-law.com) | [@HLBHealthLaw](https://twitter.com/HLBHealthLaw)

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