

## ML Strategies Health Care Preview WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>

On Friday, the news came out that Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) would move back to chair the Finance Committee, leaving the top post at the Senate Judiciary Committee. Grassley led the Senate Finance Committee (SFC) Republicans from 2001 through 2010. If past is prologue, let's take a moment to consider Grassley's previous tenure on health care and oversight at SFC.

Grassley led SFC for the 2003 passage of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA). The MMA created the Medicare drug benefit, Part D, and changed the structure of Medicare Part C to what we now know as Medicare Advantage. In 2005, he was chair for the passage of the Deficit Reduction Act, which included a provision allowing states to provide Medicaid benefits through benchmark benefit plans.

As the ranking member, he worked on the bipartisan legislation that became the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act. He was also the lead Republican in early negotiations on the bill that ultimately became the Affordable Care Act.

Under Grassley, SFC regularly considered and passed large health care bills on a bipartisan basis through regular order—whether Grassley was chair or ranking member. In 2019, there will be a number of must-pass legislative proposals headlined by a push to stave off a cut to Medicaid DSH.

If past is prologue, Grassley's previous time at SFC suggests he is likely to want to work on a bipartisan basis to address the must-pass legislation and that will open the door to the potential consideration of additional legislation.

On oversight, Grassley historically chases what he thinks is right for taxpayers. He doesn't play favorites and is willing to kick over just about any rock. Remember, Grassley once engaged in oversight of the not-for-profit status of churches. Grassley and Wyden have already worked together in oversight of Gilead's drug Sovaldi. Every health care stakeholder should be prepared for challenging questions, especially anyone with a role in drug pricing.

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*Regulation Alert: It is classic DC for a controversial regulation to be dropped on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Don't stray far from your device on Wednesday afternoon.*

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### **THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE**

No hearings this week.

### **THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE**

No hearings this week.

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