

## Viewpoints

### ML Strategies Health Care Preview

WEEK OF MARCH 25, 2019

This week, House Democrats [will unveil](#) a sweeping health care bill aimed at lowering premiums and out-of-pocket costs, and to target actions taken by the Administration to undermine the individual market. This comes on the heels of the Justice Department announcing on Monday evening that it will not defend the ACA in the *Texas v. Azar* legal challenge.

We will get a preview of aspects of the House Democrats health package in a [hearing this week](#) in the Energy & Commerce Health subcommittee. While much of the legislation focuses on lowering drug costs, there's also legislation designed to bolster the Affordable Care Act. The legislation would provide funding for states to implement their exchanges, provide funding for outreach, establish a reinsurance program, and eliminate the short-term limited duration insurance plans, among other bills.

In the drug pricing space, House leadership [remain in talks](#) with the White House on legislation to lower prescription drug costs. While the talks are in the early stages, the hope is that both sides can find some overlap that could be worked into a year-end spending bill. Congressional Democrats may be pushing for Medicare Part D negotiations; however, it's unclear if the Administration will support that effort.

#### **SURPRISE BILLING**

The House Education & Labor Committee [plans to hold](#) a hearing on surprise billing next week. While the hearing won't discuss potential legislation, it is expected that several potential solutions will be discussed. Legislation is not expected until later this spring, but will be led in the Senate by Senators Bill Cassidy (LA) and Maggie Hassan (NH), who both sit on the Senate Finance and HELP Committees. While the House champions are not clear, Rep. Lloyd Doggett (TX), Chair of the Ways & Means Health Subcommittee, introduced the [No More Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2018](#), and would likely oversee the initial hearings on this issue.

Given the high-profile stature of the issue, stakeholders on both sides of the issue are hoping to shape the final package before it heads to hearings.

#### **HOUSE HEARINGS**

##### **E&C Health**

**Subcommittee** – Mark Up  
([Wed @ 10am](#))

#### **SENATE HEARINGS**

**HELP** – “Implementing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act: Making Electronic Health Information Available to Patients and Providers.”  
([Tues @ 10am](#))

**Appropriations** – “Review of the FY2020 budget request for the FDA.”  
([Thurs @ 10:30am](#))

#### **SIGN UP**

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#### **TEAM**

Alex Hecht  
Rep. Frank Guinta  
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