



Health Care Weekly Preview

Week of May 15th

We are half way through May – are we having fun yet? There is a lot of activity this week in addition to ongoing talks in the Senate regarding their version of the American Health Care Act. The reauthorization of FDA User Fees Agreements took a bipartisan step forward advancing out of the Senate HELP Committee last week. And this week, the House Ways & Means Committee will review expiring Medicare programs, as well as changes to Medicare’s payment system. We may gain insight into the Minibus that will be leaving the station later this year. Our team recently put together a cheat sheet on the [Minibus](#) and are working on an ongoing series on the structure and financing of the [various programs](#). Let us know if you have questions as we move ahead on several fronts.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

On Wednesday (5/17), the House Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee will hold a hearing titled, “Examining Initiatives to Advance Public Health.” They will review three bipartisan pieces of legislation.

On Thursday (5/18), the House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee will hold a hearing titled, “Current Status of the Medicare Program, Payment Systems, and Extenders.” That will be a discussion of extenders in their jurisdiction.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

On Tuesday (5/16), the Senate Finance Committee will hold a hearing titled, “Examining Bipartisan Medicare Policies that Improve Care for Patients with Chronic Conditions.” The [\(CHRONIC\) Care Act of 2017](#) has been in the works for some time and a number of members on the committee, both Democrats and Republicans, have co-sponsored the bill.

THE BIG PICTURE

Over the weekend, [POLITICO](#) published an article discussing the possibility of a bipartisan ACA-fix. There are some Republicans not among the working group on health care that have stated their interest in a bipartisan bill. Senate Republicans can only afford to lose two votes and that does not account for what they produce having to go back to the House. While bipartisan discussions may happen behind the scenes with vulnerable Democrats up for reelection next year or Democrats concerned with the ACA going poorly, Democrats in the main have no incentive whatsoever to work with Republicans as long as their starting point is a wildly unpopular bill.

Next week, we are likely to see a CBO score of the House-passed bill. How quickly the Senate is able to move after that remains to be seen, but know that they want to move quickly. While the Senate is trying to reach agreement on health care, all other issues are on hold. The User Fee Agreements Reauthorization, the Minibus, taxes and infrastructure all wait in the queue. Democrats in the Senate (where they do still have the ability to slow the agenda) are in no rush to allow consideration of other issues while the AHCA is outstanding.

Here to answer your questions as you need.

Don't forget to check out our blog at: <https://www.healthlawpolicymatters.com/>