



Health Care Weekly Preview

Week of November 13th

It's all about tax reform in Congress. This week, the House will be working on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and advancing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which will go before the House Rules Committee on Wednesday. This will be the last opportunity for changes on the House side prior to a potential conference with the Senate package, making this important as the Senate works on their own version. The House is also expected to consider the 21st Century Flood Reform Act on the floor this week.

On the Senate side, the Finance Committee will begin marking up the Senate version of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which should offer some insight into how quickly the Senate will be moving on the tax reform package. It's worth noting the Senate bill preserves the medical deduction that the House package eliminated. We will continue monitoring the status of this deduction as it heads through committee.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

No hearings of note this week.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

On Monday (11/13), the Senate Finance Committee will hold a hearing titled, "Open Executive Session to Consider an Original Bill Entitled the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." Coverage will begin at 3:00 p.m. [here](#).

On Tuesday (11/14), the Senate HELP Committee will hold a hearing titled, "Gene Editing Technology: Innovation and Impact."

On Wednesday (11/15), the Senate HELP Committee will hold a hearing titled, "Encouraging Healthy Communities: Perspective from the Surgeon General."

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

If all goes according to plan, the House passes a tax reform package this week and the Senate will consider their version the week after Thanksgiving. This leaves very little time to sort out a slew of issues that will be coupled with a deadline of December 8th (written in pencil, of course, a two-week extension is a near certainty). Funding the government and avoiding a shutdown will be a challenge as some members may draw lines in the sand on issues like DACA. CHIP will continue to dominate the health space. Between now and the end of the year, 11 states are expected to run out of CHIP funding, including Utah, Oregon, Nevada, and Arizona. Pennsylvania and Ohio could also exhaust funding. Some states have already taken action to notify families and consider reductions in coverage, which would be highly disruptive.

In addition to a government funding bill, a potential DACA fix, and CHIP and the minibus, Congress will likely act to dedicate funding on the opioid crisis following the Administration's emergency declaration. They may also look to boost hurricane relief efforts as they enter their third month of recovery. The process will become increasingly murky as more issues find their way to the table. And right in the middle of the three weeks needed to wrap up the year: the Alabama election.

All told, it's not outlandish that Congress could look to another continuing resolution which would take us into early 2018 as both sides sort themselves out on several problematic issues.

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