



## Health Policy Briefing

March 10, 2025

### House to Consider Clean CR Ahead of Friday's Government Funding Deadline

The House of Representatives plans to consider a clean continuing resolution (CR) on the floor this week in advance of the March 14 government funding deadline. The *Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025*, which was crafted by Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) in coordination with the White House, funds the federal government at current discretionary spending levels through the remainder of fiscal year 2025. It would also extend the health provisions that were included in the December 2024 CR until September 30/October 1, 2025. It does not include any additional health provisions such as an update to Medicare physician fee schedule payments. The path forward for the government funding bill remains unclear. Democratic support is needed to clear the 60-vote threshold to advance legislation in the Senate. In the House, Democrats stand united against a clean CR, leaving the House GOP with a narrow margin for passage. As we await congressional action to address Friday's deadline, Hart Health Strategies Inc. has put together a document outlining the various health provisions included in the last CR that are slated to expire in the coming weeks. The document is included as an addendum to this newsletter.

### House Passes Chronic Disease Coverage Bill

The House of Representatives passed the *Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act* (H.R. 919) last week. The legislation, which was passed by voice vote, would allow for pre-deductible coverage of certain health care services that treat common chronic illnesses under high-deductible health plans. These services include beta-blockers for patients with congestive heart failure, blood pressure monitors for patients with high blood pressure, glucometers for patients with diabetes, inhaled corticosteroids and peak flow meters for patients with asthma, and cholesterol drugs and testing for patients with heart disease. The bill codifies a Trump administration IRS policy first established in 2019.

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## Senate Democrats Introduce Standalone Health Package

Democratic leaders in the Senate have introduced standalone legislation featuring the bipartisan health care policies lawmakers had originally agreed to include in the 2024 year-end package. The *Bipartisan Health Care Act* (S. 891) includes the health provisions that were part of the December 17 government funding bill before it was narrowed prior to passage. These provisions include reforms to the pharmacy benefit manager industry, reauthorization of the SUPPORT Act and PAHPA, extension of telehealth flexibilities, and increases to Medicare bonuses for alternative payment model participation and Medicare physician payments. The effort is being led by Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Ranking Member Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who are pushing to pass the bill via unanimous consent. Under unanimous consent, a single senator can object and prevent passage.

## State of the Union

President Donald Trump delivered the first address of his second term in office to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday night. The theme of the speech was “Renewal of the American Dream.” During the nearly 100-minute address, which set a record for longest speech to a joint session of Congress, the President outlined his domestic policy agenda, centering on immigration, tariffs, tax cuts, and the restructuring of the federal government. While health care was not a focus of the speech, the President did mention the newly established Presidential Commission to Make America Healthy Again, promising to prioritize addressing the increasing rate of childhood cancer. “Our goal is to get toxins out of our environment, poisons out of the food supply, and keep our children healthy and strong,” the President stated. Rep. Al Green (D-Texas) was removed from the chamber by the House Sergeant at Arms, and later censured by the House of Representatives, for repeatedly interrupting the President’s address. Rep. Green later stated that he wished to make clear that the President “has no mandate to cut Medicaid,” in reference to the GOP’s recently passed budget resolution. Other Democrats in the chamber held paddles in protest during the address, which featured the message “Save Medicaid.”

## CBO Provides Estimates of E&C Program Spending

In response to a request from congressional Democrats, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has released a [memo](#) providing information on projections of mandatory spending for programs under the jurisdiction of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Democrats have asserted that the House-passed fiscal year 2025 budget resolution, which calls for \$880 billion in savings over the next decade to come from the Energy and Commerce Committee, will necessitate cuts to the Medicaid program. CBO’s projections support this assertion, estimating that non-Medicaid programs in the committee’s jurisdiction only add up to \$581 billion over the next 10 years, leaving at least \$299 billion in savings to come from Medicaid. The House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee held the first in a series of hearings last week to hear from Americans who rely on Medicaid for their health care.

## HELP Committee Holds Confirmation Hearings for NIH, FDA Nominees

The Senate HELP Committee held confirmation hearings last week for President Donald Trump’s nominees for director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and commissioner of Food and Drugs. Jay Bhattacharya, MD, the health economist and Stanford Medical School professor who has been nominated to lead the NIH, promised to establish a culture of scientific dissent at the agency during his prepared remarks. He also endorsed Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s Make America Healthy Again movement to prioritize the prevention and treatment of chronic disease, and he spoke at length on the need to address the public’s distrust of the scientific establishment. Dr. Bhattacharya pledged to conduct his own assessment of the personnel and resources necessary for the NIH in response to repeated questioning about recent agency terminations and grantmaking slowdown at the direction of the Department of Government Efficiency. When questioned about the administration’s proposed cap on indirect costs for NIH-funded research, Bhattacharya expressed support for the use of audits to increase transparency around the use of such funds.

Marty Makary, MD, a Johns Hopkins surgeon and the President’s nominee to lead the Food and Drug Administration

(FDA), spoke about his mission of radical transparency to rebuild public trust in federal health agencies during his opening remarks. Dr. Makary was questioned multiple times about the cancellation of a meeting of the FDA's vaccine advisory panel and other recent decisions made by the Trump administration impacting agency staffing; he told panel members that he has not been involved in any such decisions. In response to questions about whether he would maintain patient access to the abortion drug mifepristone, Makary stated that he would follow the law and requirements outlined in the drug's Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies. When questioned about high drug costs, the nominee expressed support for addressing patent thickets, strengthening generic and biosimilar competition, and moving products over the counter to increase price transparency.

The HELP Committee will vote on both nominations on Thursday. Bhattacharya and Makary each appear to have the votes necessary to be confirmed by the Senate. Immediately following the HELP Committee votes, the panel will convene a confirmation hearing for former congressman Dave Weldon, MD, who has been nominated to lead the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This will be the first ever CDC confirmation hearing; the pandemic preparedness PREVENTS Act passed in 2022 established a new requirement that the CDC director be subject to Senate confirmation. The Senate Finance Committee will meet on Friday to consider the nomination of Mehmet Oz, MD, to serve as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

## Nationwide Preliminary Injunction Issued Against NIH in Response to Indirect Cost Rate Cuts

On Wednesday, March 5, Judge Angel Kelley of the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts [issued a nationwide preliminary injunction](#) blocking the implementation of NIH guidance aimed at capping NIH funding for indirect research costs. The court found that NIH failed to provide an adequate rationale for the policy change (rendering it “arbitrary and capricious”) and did not follow the required notice-and-comment process under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). Additionally, the court agreed with the plaintiffs—which included 22 state attorneys general and major research institutions—that the NIH policy would cause irreparable financial harm to those affected.

The preliminary injunction prevents NIH from imposing the 15% cap on indirect costs across states and institutions nationwide until the case can be fully determined on the merits. While the administration contends that the cuts would allocate more money to direct research (including savings of approximately \$4 billion annually), the plaintiffs have argued it would undermine critical infrastructure. Following the preliminary injunction, it's not yet clear whether the federal government's response will include a challenge to the injunction and/or a separate attempt to achieve the rate cuts through other administrative means (e.g., appeals to Congress to change the underlying administrative procedures).

## Trump Administration Drops Lawsuit on Emergency Abortions

The Trump administration has dropped a lawsuit against the state of Idaho related to the right to emergency abortion care. The case, which was initiated by the Biden administration, argued that the state's near-total abortion ban is subject to the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act's (EMTALA) requirements that abortion be offered when it constitutes the necessary stabilizing treatment for a pregnant patient experiencing a medical emergency. While the Department of Justice moved to dismiss the case on Wednesday, an Idaho health system secured a temporary restraining order that same day as a part of a separate lawsuit that bars the state attorney general from prosecuting medical providers who perform abortions to treat an emergency medical condition.

## NIH to Centralize Peer Review

The NIH announced plans last week to centralize peer review of all applications for grants, cooperative agreements, and research and development contracts within the agency's Center for Scientific Review (CSR). Under the proposed consolidation, CSR will conduct all first-level research proposals, eliminating reviews by Institutes' and Centers' study sections. NIH estimates that the proposed approach will save more than \$65 million annually by eliminating duplicative efforts across the agency. The proposal is now under review with implementation pending external review by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Management and Budget, providing Congress with a 15-day notification period, and issuing a Federal Register notice.

## CDC Plans for Study on Vaccines, Autism

The CDC is reportedly planning a study on the potential link between vaccines and autism. While the news follows the confirmation of Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who has previously promoted anti-vaccine views, as Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, it remains unclear if the Secretary is involved with the planned study. The U.S. is currently in the midst of one of the nation's largest measles outbreaks of the past decade, with more than 200 cases in twelve states and two deaths in Texas and New Mexico. In response to the outbreak, Secretary Kennedy wrote an op-ed titled "[Measles Outbreak is Call to action for All of Us](#)" explaining that the "MMR vaccine is crucial to avoiding potentially deadly disease."

## Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups

Senate Armed Services Committee hearing to receive testimony on stabilizing the Military Health System to prepare for large-scale combat operations; 9:30 a.m.; March 11

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing to consider pending legislation; 10:30 a.m.; March 11

House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health hearing "After the Hospital: Ensuring Access to Quality Post-Acute Care;" 2:00 p.m.; March 11

House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health legislative hearing; 2:15 p.m.; March 11

Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing "Breaking the Cycle of Senior Loneliness: Strengthening Family and Community Support;" 3:30 p.m.; March 12

Senate HELP Committee executive session to consider the nominations of Dr. Jayanta Bhattacharya to serve as Director of the National Institutes of Health and Dr. Martin Makary to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs; 9:30 a.m.; March 13

Senate HELP Committee hearing on the nomination of Dr. David Weldon to Serve as Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 10:00 a.m.; March 13

Senate Finance Committee hearing to consider the nomination of Dr. Mehmet Oz to be Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator; 10:00 a.m.; March 14

## Recently Introduced Health Legislation

S.812 — A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure veterans may obtain a physical copy of a form for reimbursement of certain travel expenses by mail or at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Scott, Rick [Sen.-R-FL]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

S.817 — A bill to provide for the imposition of sanctions with respect to forced organ harvesting within the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Cruz, Ted [Sen.-R-TX]; Committees: Senate - Foreign Relations

S.819 — A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax rate parity among all tobacco products, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Durbin, Richard J. [Sen.-D-IL]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.822 — A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a process for science-focused drug development meetings led by the Reagan-Udall Foundation for the Food and Drug Administration with respect to drugs for rare diseases and conditions, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Klobuchar, Amy [Sen.-D-MN]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

H.Res.180 — Supporting the designation of March 2025 as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; Sponsor: Green, Mark E. [Rep.-R-TN-7]; Committees: House - Oversight and Government Reform

H.Res.182 — Expressing support for the designation of March 3, 2025, as “National Triple-Negative Breast Cancer Day”; Sponsor: Morelle, Joseph D. [Rep.-D-NY-25]; Committees: House - Oversight and Government Reform

H.R.1775 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modify the criteria for designation of rural emergency hospitals; Sponsor: Arrington, Jodey C. [Rep.-R-TX-19]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

H.R.1776 — To amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to establish a reinsurance program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Palmer, Gary J. [Rep.-R-AL-6]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means; Education and Workforce

H.R.1784 — To amend titles XI and XVIII of the Social Security Act to strengthen health care waste, fraud, and abuse provisions; Sponsor: Doggett, Lloyd [Rep.-D-TX-37]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1785 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements for the provision of certain high-cost durable medical equipment and laboratory testing, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Doggett, Lloyd [Rep.-D-TX-37]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1793 — To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for outreach requirements for Department of Veterans Affairs training and rehabilitation programs for veterans with service-connected disabilities, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Hamadeh, Abraham [Rep.-R-AZ-8]; Committees: House - Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.1794 — To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish an Abraham Accords Office within Food and Drug Administration, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Harshbarger, Diana [Rep.-R-TN-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1796 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a sickle cell disease prevention and treatment demonstration program; Sponsor: James, John [Rep.-R-MI-10]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1798 — To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax rate parity among all tobacco products, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Krishnamoorthi, Raja [Rep.-D-IL-8]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

H.R.1802 – To prohibit the use of animals in federally funded research, promote the adoption of humane and scientifically advanced alternatives, and ensure the ethical rehoming of retired research animals, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Malliotakis, Nicole [Rep.-R-NY-11]; Committees: House - Science, Space, and Technology; Energy and Commerce; Agriculture; Rules

H.R.1805 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend Medicare-dependent hospital and Medicare low-volume hospital payments, and to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to carry out a report on Medicare rural hospital classifications; Sponsor: Miller, Carol D. [Rep.-R-WV-1]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

H.R.1806 — To provide for research and education with respect to triple-negative breast cancer, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Morelle, Joseph D. [Rep.-D-NY-25]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1812 — To amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to establish a grant program for multigenerational activities for long-term care facilities; Sponsor: Strickland, Marilyn [Rep.-D-WA-10]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

S.825 — A bill to require the Attorney General to propose a program for making treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder available to public safety officers, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Grassley, Chuck [Sen.-R-IA]; Committees: Senate - Judiciary

S.830 — A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program relating to lifespan respite care, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Collins, Susan M. [Sen.-R-ME]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.832 — A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to equalize the negotiation period between small-molecule and biologic candidates under the Drug Price Negotiation Program; Sponsor: Tillis, Thomas [Sen.-R-NC]; Committees: Senate - Finance

H.Res.185 — Recognizing the need of Congress to prevent, address, and treat obesity as a disease in the United States on this World Obesity Day, March 4, 2025; Sponsor: Cherfilus-McCormick, Sheila [Rep.-D-FL-20]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1842 — To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow certain veterinary expenses for pets and service animals to be treated as amounts paid for medical care for purposes of a health savings account or flexible savings account; Sponsor: Tenney, Claudia [Rep.-R-NY-24]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

S.851 — A bill to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to disqualify any State that discriminates against parents or guardians who oppose medical, surgical, pharmacological, psychological treatment, or clothing and social changes related to affirming the subjective claims of gender identity expressed by any minor if such claimed identity is inconsistent with such minor's biological sex from receiving funding under such Act; Sponsor: Banks, Jim [Sen.-R-IN]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.854 — A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Paul, Rand [Sen.-R-KY]; Committees: Senate - Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

S.862 — A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish hyperbaric oxygen therapy to certain veterans with traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder; Sponsor: Tuberville, Tommy [Sen.-R-AL]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

S.863 — A bill to provide consumers with the right to delete their genomic data, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Cassidy, Bill [Sen.-R-LA]; Committees: Senate - Commerce, Science, and Transportation

S.864 — A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to apply financial assistance towards the cost-sharing requirements of health insurance plans, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Marshall, Roger [Sen.-R-KS]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

H.R.1843 — To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to increase transparency in generic drug applications; Sponsor: Dunn, Neal P. [Rep.-R-FL-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1860 — To designate Regional Breast and Gynecologic Cancer Care Coordinators to expand the work of the Breast and Gynecologic Oncology System of Excellence at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Garcia, Sylvia R. [Rep.-D-TX-29]; Committees: House - Veterans' Affairs

H.R.1864 — To amend title 31, United States Code, to establish the Life Sciences Research Security Board, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Griffith, H. Morgan [Rep.-R-VA-9]; Committees: House - Science, Space, and Technology; Energy and Commerce

H.R.1866 — GUARD Act - To amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to disqualify any State that discriminates against parents or guardians who oppose medical, surgical, pharmacological, psychological treatment, or clothing and social changes related to affirming the subjective claims of gender identity expressed by any minor if such claimed identity is inconsistent with such minor's biological sex from receiving funding under such Act; Sponsor: Hageman, Harriet M. [Rep.-R-WY-At Large]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

H.R.1867 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove in-person requirements under Medicare for mental health services furnished through telehealth and telecommunications technology; Sponsor: Hern, Kevin [Rep.-R-OK-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1875 — To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require certain additional provider screening under the Medicaid program; Sponsor: Langworthy, Nicholas A. [Rep.-R-NY-23]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1878 — To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an income tax credit for fertility treatments; Sponsor: Lawler, Michael [Rep.-R-NY-17]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

S.Res.119 — A resolution memorializing those lost to the COVID-19 pandemic; Sponsor: Warren, Elizabeth [Sen.-D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.879 — A bill to expand medical, employment, and other benefits for individuals serving as family caregivers for certain veterans, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Moran, Jerry [Sen.-R-KS]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

S.882 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to assure pharmacy access and choice for beneficiaries under prescription drug plans and MA-PD plans and to establish requirements of pharmacy benefit managers under Medicare part D; Sponsor: Blackburn, Marsha [Sen.-R-TN]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.891 — A bill to extend expiring health provisions and improve health care delivery; Sponsor: Wyden, Ron [Sen.-D-OR]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.906 — A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a pilot program to support evidence-based mental health peer support activities for students; Sponsor: Hickenlooper, John W. [Sen.-D-CO]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

H.J.Res.74 — Disapproving the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Prohibition on Creditors and Consumer Reporting Agencies Concerning Medical Information (Regulation V)"; Sponsor: Norman, Ralph [Rep.-R-SC-5]; Committees: House - Financial Services

H.R.1899 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow for the furnishing of audio-only telehealth services; Sponsor: Feenstra, Randy [Rep.-R-IA-4]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1901 — To amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to permanently extend the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Barragán, Nanette Diaz [Rep.-D-CA-44]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1902 — To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to improve the detection, prevention, and treatment of mental health issues among public safety officers, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Bera, Ami [Rep.-D-CA-6]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Science, Space, and Technology

H.R.1906 — To provide for the prioritization of projects that provide behavioral and mental health treatment services in selecting grantees under certain rural development programs, and extend the substance abuse disorder set-aside and priority under the programs; Sponsor: Budzinski, Nikki [Rep.-D-IL-13]; Committees: House – Agriculture

H.R.1909 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize support for State-based maternal mortality review committees, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to disseminate best practices on maternal mortality prevention to hospitals, State-based professional societies, and perinatal quality collaboratives, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Carter, Earl L. “Buddy” [Rep.-R-GA-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1921 — To direct the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to clarify that fully implanted active middle ear hearing devices are prosthetics and are not subject to the hearing aid coverage exclusion under the Medicare program; Sponsor: Fischbach, Michelle [Rep.-R-MN-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1922 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to exempt certain drugs from the part D manufacturer discount program under the Medicare program; Sponsor: Garbarino, Andrew R. [Rep.-R-NY-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1924 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a new criterion for the nonapplication of site-neutral payments to long-term care hospitals under the Medicare program; Sponsor: Hern, Kevin [Rep.-R-OK-1]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

H.R.1931 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to facilitate patient access to certain pediatric technologies; Sponsor: Joyce, John [Rep.-R-PA-13]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.1937 — To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recognize nurse registries for purposes of the Veterans Community Care Program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Mast, Brian J. [Rep.-R-FL-21]; Committees: House - Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.1947 — To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to furnish stellate ganglion block to veterans and members of the Armed Forces with post-traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Perry, Scott [Rep.-R-PA-10]; Committees: House - Armed Services; Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.1950 — To protect benefits provided under Social Security, Medicare, and any other program of benefits administered by the Social Security Administration or the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; Sponsor: Pocan, Mark [Rep.-D-WI-2]; Committees: House – Rules

H.R.1961 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish and implement a department-wide after-action program and a risk communication strategy, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Torres, Ritchie [Rep.-D-NY-15]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.1966 — To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to award grants to expand and improve maternal health care services, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Waters, Maxine [Rep.-D-CA-43]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce





## Expiring Health Provisions – March/April 2025

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The *American Relief Act, 2025* ([P.L. 118-158](#)) is the most recent continuing resolution (CR) and was signed into law on December 21, 2025. The bill extends funding for federal discretionary programs at the same pro-rated levels that they were funded at in the September 26, 2024 CR ([P.L. 118-83](#)). Absent action by Congress, funding for these discretionary programs will expire after March 14, 2025.

In addition to extending federal discretionary funding through March 14, 2025, the CR extended funding and authorities for several other health programs that are not always tied to the annual appropriations cycle (some of these programs have occasionally been extended on a multi-year basis). A list of these programs and authorities is below; all were extended until March 31 or April 1, 2025 (i.e., a three-month extension from their previous December 31 or January 1 expirations).

### MEDICARE

- **Increased Inpatient Hospital Payment Adjustment for Certain Low-Volume Hospitals:** March 31, 2025
- **Medicare-Dependent Hospital Program:** April 1, 2025
- **Payments for Ambulance Services:** April 1, 2025
- **Funding for Quality Measure Endorsement, Input, and Selection:** March 31, 2025
- **Outreach and Assistance for Low-Income Programs:** Extends the following programs through March 31, 2025:
  - State Health Insurance Assistance Programs
  - Area Agencies on Aging
  - Aging and Disability Resource Centers
  - Coordination of Efforts to Inform Older Americans About Benefits Available Under Federal and State Programs
- **Work Geographic Index Floor:** April 1, 2025
- **Certain Telehealth Flexibilities:** Extends the following programs and authorities through March 31, 2025:
  - Removing Geographic Requirements and Expanding Originating Sites for Telehealth Services
  - Expanding Practitioners Eligible to Furnish Telehealth Services
  - Extending Telehealth Services for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics
  - Delaying the In-person Requirements Under Medicare for Mental Health Services Furnished Through Telehealth and Telecommunications Technology
    - Delay in requirements for mental health services furnished through telehealth
    - Mental health visits furnished by rural health clinics

- Mental health visits furnished by federally qualified health centers
  - Allowing for the Furnishing of Audio-only Telehealth Services
  - Extending Use of Telehealth to Conduct Face-to-Face Encounter Prior to Recertification of Eligibility for Hospice Care
- **Acute Hospital Care at Home Waiver Authorities:** March 31, 2025
- **Temporary Inclusion of Authorized Oral Antiviral Drugs as Covered Part D Drugs:** March 31, 2025

## MEDICAID

- **Eliminating Certain Disproportionate Share Hospital Payment Cuts:** April 1, 2025

## PUBLIC HEALTH EXTENDERS

- **Community Health Centers:** Funded through March 31, 2025
- **National Health Service Corps:** Funded through March 31, 2025
- **Teaching Health Centers Graduate Medical Education:** March 31, 2025
- **Special Diabetes Program:** March 31, 2025
- **Special Diabetes Program for Indians:** March 31, 2025
- **National Health Security:** Extends the following advisory committees and authorities through March 31, 2025:
  - Temporary Reassignment of State and Local Personnel During a Public Health Emergency
  - Nondisclosure authority for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority
  - Limited antitrust exemption for meetings and consultations to discuss security countermeasures, qualified countermeasures, or qualified pandemic or epidemic product development
  - National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters
  - National Advisory Committee on Seniors and Disasters
  - National Advisory Committee on Individuals With Disabilities and Disasters
  - Direct hire authority for the Assistant Secretary and Response for the National Disaster Medical System

## HUMAN SERVICES

- **Sexual Risk Avoidance Education:** March 31, 2025
- **Personal Responsibility Education:** March 31, 2025
- **Family-to-Family Health Information Centers:** April 1, 2025