



Health Policy Briefing

August 11, 2025

Cassidy, Hassan Raise Concerns about UHG’s Failure to Protect Against Cyberattacks

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Chair Bill Cassidy, MD (R-La.) and Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.) have sent a [letter](#) to UnitedHealth Group (UHG) regarding the February breach of Episource, a UnitedHealth subsidiary. The data breach impacted at least 5.4 million individuals, and occurred less than a year after the breach of United’s Change Healthcare – the largest breach of health data in U.S. history. The lawmakers request information about how UHG has responded to the Episource and Change attacks and how it plans to prevent future incidents. “The hack on Episource...raises questions about the company’s commitment to securing protected health information, given the repeated security failures at the company,” the letter states. “The failure to properly secure internal systems is particularly troubling given the wide impact that the Change Healthcare attack had on the health care system.” The senators request a response from the company by August 18.

Democrats Urge Pause on WISeR Model

A group of 42 Democrats in the House of Representatives have sent a [letter](#) to the administration regarding a new initiative within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Innovation Center to test the expansion of prior authorization in the traditional Medicare program. The letter, led by Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and Lloyd Doggett (D-Texas) raises concerns about the potential impact of the Wasteful and Inappropriate Service Reduction (WISeR) model on quality of coverage in Medicare and urges the Innovation Center to immediately pause implementation of the model, which is set to begin on January 1, 2026. “We understand that CMMI has intentionally selected health care services that are reported to have limited clinical value and may be vulnerable to abuse in the Medicare program, and we support efforts to ensure Medicare remains a good steward of taxpayer dollars,” the lawmakers state. “However, the expansion of AI-fueled prior authorization will not improve program integrity in traditional Medicare.”

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GAO Finds That NIH Violated Law By Withholding Funding

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has released a new [decision](#) determining that the Trump administration has failed to comply with the requirements of the Impoundment Control Act in its failure to disburse certain funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that was appropriated by Congress. The Impoundment Control Act outlines the limited circumstances under which the administration is permitted to withhold congressional appropriations. The GAO details how, following several executive orders earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its agencies, including NIH, began canceling existing grants. HHS also issued a memorandum directing its agencies to cease the publication of grant review meeting notices in the ***Federal Register***, a key step in NIH's grant review process. As a result, NIH reduced its awarding of new grants. GAO concludes that NIH violated the Impoundment Control Act by withholding these funds from obligation and expenditure, and notes that HHS has shown no sufficient justification for the pause that it instituted.

President Signs Order Aimed at Grantmaking Oversight

President Donald Trump signed an [executive order](#) (E.O.) on Thursday aimed at improving oversight of federal grantmaking. The E.O. directs federal agencies to designate a senior appointee responsible for creating a process to review new funding opportunity announcements and to review discretionary grants to ensure that they are consistent with the administration's priorities. The order specifies that awards shall not be used to fund, promote, encourage, subsidize, or facilitate (1) racial preferences or other forms of racial discrimination by the grant recipient; (2) denial by the grant recipient of the sex binary in humans or the notion that sex is a chosen or mutable characteristic; (3) illegal immigration; or (4) any other initiatives that compromise public safety or promote anti-American values. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the federal government's largest grantmaking agency; the National Institutes of Health, for example, has historically relied on a peer-review process to determine which research proposals receive funding.

FDA Announces End of IV Saline Solutions Shortage

Commissioner of Food and Drugs Marty Makary, MD [announced](#) last week that the nationwide shortage of certain IV saline solutions (sodium chloride 0.9% injection products) has officially ended. The products have been in shortage in recent years in the aftermath of Hurricanes Maria and Helene, which impacted manufacturing facilities. "For other IV fluids still in shortage, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is working closely with manufacturers and will continue to monitor the supply to help ensure patients have access to the medicines they need," Dr. Makary stated. "The FDA remains focused on doing all we can to help mitigate shortages and prevent them from occurring. We will continue working diligently to monitor supply levels, anticipate potential disruptions, and support a robust, secure, and transparent supply chain for medical products."

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Recently Introduced Health Legislation

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H.R.4871 — To provide remedies to members of the uniformed services discharged for not complying with the COVID-19 vaccination mandate. Sponsor: Zinke, Ryan K. [Rep.-R-MT-1]; Committees: House - Judiciary; Armed Services

H.R.4858 — To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to deem adulterated food containing certain color additives, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Meng, Grace [Rep.-D-NY-6]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.4855 — To improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to certain members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Larsen, Rick [Rep.-D-WA-2]; Committees: House - Veterans' Affairs; Armed Services

H.R.4849 — To repeal health-related portions of An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Gray, Adam [Rep.-D-CA-13]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

H.R.4844 — To establish an occupational safety and health standard to protect farmworkers from wildfire smoke and excessive heat, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Dexter, Maxine [Rep.-D-OR-3]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

H.R.4841 — Stomach Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Act – To require the Director of the National Cancer Institute to conduct a review of the current state of stomach cancer incidence, prevention, screening, awareness, and future public health importance, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Chu, Judy [Rep.-D-CA-28]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Armed Services; Veterans' Affairs

H.R.4837 — To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to expand a directive of the Veterans Health Administration regarding informed consent to apply to certain types of medications. Sponsor: Bilirakis, Gus M. [Rep.-R-FL-12]; Committees: House - Veterans' Affairs

H.Res.630 — Recognizing July 28, 2025, as “World Hepatitis Day”. Sponsor: Velázquez, Nydia M. [Rep.-D-NY-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.Res.629 — Honoring the life of Dr. Paul Farmer by recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to adopt a 21st-century global health solidarity strategy and take actions to address past and ongoing harms that undermine the health and well-being of people around the world. Sponsor: Schakowsky, Janice D. [Rep.-D-IL-9]; Committees: House - Foreign Affairs; Judiciary

S.2673 — A bill to require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to improve the transition of medics into the civilian workforce in certain health care occupations and to modify the assistance provided to separated members of the Armed Forces seeking employment with health care providers, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Kelly, Mark [Sen.-D-AZ]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

S.2665 — A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for notification by manufacturers of critical drugs of increased demand, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Klobuchar, Amy [Sen.-D-MN]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.2658 — A bill to require sponsors of drug applications and holders of approved applications to provide certain submissions and communications to the Food and Drug Administration and the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Sponsor: Hassan, Margaret Wood [Sen.-D-NH]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.2650 — A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for the reallocation of unused waivers of the foreign residency requirement for certain J-visa holders. Sponsor: Ernst, Joni [Sen.-R-IA]; Committees: Senate - Judiciary

S.2649 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to release accreditation surveys related to hospitals and psychiatric hospitals and certain information related to such surveys for psychiatric hospitals, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Grassley, Chuck [Sen.-R-IA]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.2645 — A bill to establish the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Program, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Peters, Gary C. [Sen.-D-MI]; Committees: Senate - Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

H.Res.639 — Expressing support for the designation of the week beginning August 3, 2025, as “National Health Center Week”, and encouraging all Americans to take part in the week by visiting their local health center and celebrating the important partnership between America’s community health centers and the communities they serve; Sponsor: Valadao, David G. [Rep.-R-CA-22]; Committees: House - Oversight and Government Reform

H.R.4876 — To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide abortion care, counseling, and related services and medication to certain individuals who receive health care furnished by the Secretary, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Brownley, Julia [Rep.-D-CA-26]; Committees: House - Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.4882 — To establish a Gun Safety Board, and for other purposes; Sponsor: DeSaulnier, Mark [Rep.-D-CA-10]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.4883 — To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish and maintain a local gun violence prevention laws database, and for other purposes; Sponsor: DeSaulnier, Mark [Rep.-D-CA-10]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.4886 — To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for consideration of certain factors under the Veterans Community Care Program, to provide for expedited approval of certain requests for Veterans Care Agreements, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Houchin, Erin [Rep.-R-IN-9]; Committees: House - Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.4901 — To award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the brave women who served in World War II as members of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and U.S. Navy Nurse Corps; Sponsor: Stefanik, Elise M. [Rep.-R-NY-21]; Committees: House - Financial Services; House Administration

H.R.4903 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to carry out, expand, and coordinate programs relating to plastic exposure health research, to authorize grants, contracts, and agreements with respect to such research, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Stevens, Haley M. [Rep.-D-MI-11]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce