



Health Policy Briefing

August 18, 2025

Doc Caucus Recommends USPSTF Reforms

Members of the GOP Doctors Caucus have sent a [letter](#) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) calling for a complete overhaul of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF). The letter, led by Rep. Diana Harshbarger, Pharm.D. (R-Tenn.) and Doc Caucus co-chair Rep. Greg Murphy, M.D. (R-N.C.), argues that the USPSTF has “allocated substantial attention to divisive social issues,” such as race and gender identity, “that extend beyond traditional clinical parameters.” The lawmakers also raise concerns related to USPSTF’s structure, including the lack of a mandate for the Task Force to be comprised of any specialty, resulting in the task force making recommendations in medical fields in which they have no practical knowledge. The Caucus recommends the creation of such a mandate, full transparency in how USPSTF’s decisions are made, and a renewed focus on public health outcomes rather than social issues.

House Democrats Raise Concerns with WISeR Model

A group of 17 Democrats in the House of Representatives have sent a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requesting more information about the [Wasteful and Inappropriate Service Reduction \(WISeR\) Model](#). The model will allow for expanded use of prior authorization in the traditional Medicare program. The letter, led by Reps. Suzan DelBene (D-Wash.) and Ami Bera, MD (D-Calif.), expresses concerns that WISeR will “likely limit beneficiaries’ access to care, increase burden on our already overburdened health care work force, and create perverse incentives to put profit over patients.” The model is set to begin on January 1, 2026, and run for six performance periods. It will apply to a list of outpatient procedures identified as vulnerable to fraud, waste and abuse, or inappropriate use for providers and patients in New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona, and Washington. The letter highlights how the Trump administration has publicly recognized the problems with prior authorization and secured pledges from health insurers to curtail abuses of the practice. The lawmakers request a response from CMS with details about the model’s scope, implementation, and beneficiary safeguards by September 1.

Inside

President Signs Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Resiliency Order.....	2
RFK Jr. Revives Vaccine Safety Task Force.....	2
Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups.....	2
Recently Introduced Health Legislation.....	2

President Signs Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Resiliency Order

President Donald Trump has signed an [executive order](#) that aims to ensure a resilient domestic supply chain for essential medicines by filling the Strategic Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients Reserve (SAPIR) with critical drug components. The order directs the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to develop a list of approximately 26 “critical drugs vital to national health and security” and to then fill the reserve with a six-month supply of the active pharmaceutical ingredients necessary to produce those medications. President Trump established the SAPIR during his first term amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Last week’s executive order also instructs ASPR to develop a proposal for opening a second SAPIR repository to further enhance pharmaceutical supply chain resilience.

RFK Jr. Revives Vaccine Safety Task Force

HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced the reinstatement of the Task Force on Safer Childhood Vaccines last week. The task force was first established in 1986. It was charged with promoting the development of effective immunizations that produce fewer serious adverse events and providing a related report to Congress every two years. The task force was disbanded in 1998 after issuing a report containing vaccine safety recommendations. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Jay Bhattacharya, MD will lead the revived task force, which will also include participation by leadership from the Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “By reinstating this task force, we are reaffirming our commitment to rigorous science, continuous improvement and the trust of American families,” Dr. Bhattacharya said in a statement. “NIH is proud to lead this effort to advance vaccine safety and support innovation that protects children without compromise.” HHS has not provided further information about the membership of the task force, which will collaborate with the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines in the development of its recommendations.

Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups

Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee field hearing “Separating Fact from Fiction: Exploring Alternative Therapies for Veterans’ Mental Health;” Montevallo, AL; 12:00 p.m.; August 22

Recently Introduced Health Legislation

H.Res.641 — Expressing support for community health centers during National Health Center Week, August 3 through August 9, 2025, and encouraging all Americans to take part in this week by visiting their local community health center and celebrating the important partnership between America’s community health centers and the communities they serve; Sponsor: Davis, Donald G. [Rep.-D-NC-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.4918 — To authorize the Attorney General to carry out a pilot program to make grants to entities to develop gun safety technology, and for other purposes; Sponsor: DeSaulnier, Mark [Rep.-D-CA-10]; Committees: House – Judiciary

H.R.4953 — To authorize a civil right of action for individuals on whom gender-related medical treatment was performed while such individual was a minor, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Mace, Nancy [Rep.-R-SC-1]; Committees: House – Judiciary

H.R.4958 — To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require notification to the Food and Drug Administration prior to use of substances as generally recognized as safe, reassessment of the safety of certain substances marketed as generally recognized as safe, provide resources for reviews and reassessments, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Pallone, Frank [Rep.-D-NJ-6]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.4960 — BENES 2.0 Act – Sponsor: Ruiz, Raul [Rep.-D-CA-25]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

H.R.4963 — To provide for the rescheduling of marijuana into schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act; Sponsor: Steube, W. Gregory [Rep.-R-FL-17]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Judiciary