



## Health Policy Briefing

March 16, 2026

### House GOP Holds Annual Policy Retreat

The House of Representatives was not in session last week, with Republican members attending their annual policy retreat at President Donald Trump’s resort in Doral, Florida. During the retreat lawmakers discussed their legislative priorities for the year ahead of the November midterm elections. House Budget Committee Chair Jodey Arrington (R-Texas) proposed revisiting Medicaid spending cuts previously considered during the last budget reconciliation process as a part of Republicans’ broader focus on fraud prevention. While House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) has indicated some support for pursuing a second reconciliation bill, the idea has not been endorsed by the President and was not mentioned in his address to lawmakers during last week’s retreat.

### Sen. Johnson to Probe FDA Denial of Rare Disease Treatments

Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) plans to launch an investigation into the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) recent denial of several treatments for rare diseases. The announcement was made during a news conference last week attended by patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Sen. Johnson is seeking to review the FDA’s complete response letters – the written denials to drug manufacturers to reject their applications as submitted. The lawmaker specifically characterized the FDA’s request for a new trial of an experimental gene therapy for Huntington’s disease as “bureaucratic idiocy.” Johnson is also considering calling FDA officials to testify before the Senate’s Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which he chairs.

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## Comer Asks GAO to Investigate Medicaid, CHIP Fraud

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chair James Comer (R-Ky.) has [asked](#) the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review allegations of fraud in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and other federally funded state-administered benefits programs. Chairman Comer's letter to GAO Acting Comptroller General Orice Williams Brown calls on the agency to conduct a comprehensive investigation of federally funded, state-administered programs to identify indicators of fraud, assess fraud prevention efforts, and determine whether existing oversight mechanisms are sufficient to safeguard taxpayer dollars nationwide. "It is critical that federal programs identify issues before they arise, therefore a close review of programs across states would benefit the Committee's further nationwide oversight and legislative reform work," Comer wrote. "The intent of this work is for GAO and the Committee to gain a thorough understanding of how such federally funded, state-administered programs can be reformed by addressing program specific federal authorizing statutes, federal or State level policies, or specific executive branch agency management and administrative practices and controls."

## Lawmakers Request Details on Study of Reusable PPE

A bipartisan group of lawmakers are [urging](#) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to release a study on the benefits and feasibility of expanding the use of reusable personal protective equipment (PPE) and other health care textiles. A related study from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health was expected to be completed in 2024 but has not yet been published. The lawmakers cite evidence that reusable equipment reduces greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, and solid waste, improves supply-chain resilience, and provides equal or better liquid barrier performance compared with disposable products. The letter was signed by Reps. Greg Landsman (D-Ohio), Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.), and Troy Carter (D-La.).

## JEC Releases Brief on Impact of MA on Part B Premiums

The Joint Economic Committee (JEC) released an [issue brief](#) last week titled ***The Part B Premium Pass-Through: Medicare Advantage Overpayments Inflate Premiums for All***. According to the brief, Medicare Advantage (MA) overpayments increased Part B premiums by \$212 per enrollee in 2025, totaling \$13.4 billion in higher premiums. Since 2016, MA overpayments have added an estimated \$82 billion to Part B premiums, with the Committee estimating that traditional Medicare beneficiaries bore roughly \$6 billion of that cost. The brief suggests that aligning MA payments with traditional Medicare would prevent unnecessary premium growth, increase the affordability of Medicare, and protect net Social Security benefits, given that Part B premiums are withheld from Social Security checks for most seniors.

## Rep. Kevin Kiley Leaves GOP in Switch to Independent

Rep. Kevin Kiley (Calif.) announced last week that he will leave the Republican Party and become an independent. Rep. Kiley had previously announced his plans to run for reelection as an independent in November. His decision involves filing a letter with the House Clerk to drop his GOP identification for the remainder of the current Congress. He cited the redistricting battles occurring across the country, including a recent redrawing of the House map in California, as the reason for his decision. He will continue to caucus with Republicans, allowing him to keep his committee positions. Kiley currently serves on the House Education and Workforce Committee.

## Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies oversight hearing on the National Institutes of Health; 10:30 a.m.; March 17

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing “Protecting Patients and Safeguarding Taxpayer Dollars: The Role of CMS in Combatting Medicare and Medicaid Fraud;” 2:00 p.m.; March 17

House Select Committee on China hearing “From the Science Lab to the Medicine Cabinet: How China is Cornering the Market on Our Medicines;” 10:00 a.m.; March 18

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health hearing “Lowering Health Care Costs for All Americans: An Examination of the U.S. Provider Landscape;” 10:15 a.m.; March 18

House Veterans’ Affairs Committee legislative hearing; 10:15 a.m.; March 18

House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health hearing “Improving Kidney Health Through Better Prevention and Innovative Treatment;” 2:00 p.m.; March 18

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Member Day hearing; 10:00 a.m.; March 19

## Recently Introduced Health Legislation

S.4027 — A bill to ban anticompetitive terms in facility and insurance contracts that limit access to higher quality, lower cost care; Sponsor: Husted, Jon [Sen.-R-OH]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4031 — A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to designate medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs as innovative therapies centers of excellence, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Gallego, Ruben [Sen.-D-AZ]; Committees: Senate - Veterans’ Affairs

H.R.7860 — To amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to address fraudulent enrollments in the Exchanges; Sponsor: Barrett, Tom [Rep.-R-MI-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7861 — To amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide for certain reforms with respect to medical loss ratios and reducing fraudulent enrollment in qualified health plans; Sponsor: Barrett, Tom [Rep.-R-MI-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7863 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to align payment under Medicare for specified surgical procedures with high-cost supplies furnished in office-based facilities, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Bilirakis, Gus M. [Rep.-R-FL-12]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7868 — To amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the Living Organ Donation Reimbursement Program; Sponsor: DelBene, Suzan K. [Rep.-D-WA-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7871 — To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to codify value-based purchasing arrangements under the Medicaid program and reforms related to price reporting under such arrangements, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Guthrie, Brett [Rep.-R-KY-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7877 — To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a demonstration program to test mandatory coverage of treatment for wound care for epidermolysis bullosa under the Medicaid program; Sponsor: Landsman, Greg [Rep.-D-OH-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7879 — To require the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other relevant departments and agencies, as appropriate, to formulate a strategy for the Federal Government to secure support from foreign countries, multilateral organizations, and other appropriate entities to facilitate the development and commercialization of qualified pandemic or epidemic products, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Levin, Mike [Rep.-D-CA-49]; Committees: House - Foreign Affairs

H.R.7884 — To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit to health care professionals that provide health care services in qualifying facilities, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Tenney, Claudia [Rep.-R-NY-24]; Committees: House - Ways and Means

S.Con.Res.28 — A concurrent resolution expressing support for the recognition of March 10, 2026, as “Abortion Provider Appreciation Day”; Sponsor: Hirono, Mazie K. [Sen.-D-HI]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4036 — A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand the Project ECHO Grant Program, to allow for such program to disseminate knowledge and build capacity to address Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Capito, Shelley Moore [Sen.-R-WV]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4037 — A bill to ensure continued access to diabetes technology upon Medicare enrollment, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Shaheen, Jeanne [Sen.-D-NH]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.4039 — A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reverse the reductions in Federal loan availability for graduate and professional students enacted under Public Law 119-21; Sponsor: Alsobrooks, Angela D. [Sen.-D-MD]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4043 — A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide treatment and rehabilitation for seriously mentally ill and homeless veterans, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Banks, Jim [Sen.-R-IN]; Committees: Senate - Veterans’ Affairs

S.4048 — A bill to amend the Public Health Service to require the Secretary to award grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to eligible entities to establish, maintain, or improve activities related to the detection and monitoring of infectious diseases through wastewater for public health emergency preparedness and response purposes, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Scott, Tim [Sen.-R-SC]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4061 — A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require local educational agencies to include mental health and suicide prevention information on student identification cards, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Banks, Jim [Sen.-R-IN]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4066 — A bill to provide that the approved application under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act for the drug mifepristone for the purpose of the termination of intrauterine pregnancy is deemed to have been withdrawn, to establish a Federal tort for harm to women caused by chemical abortion drugs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Hawley, Josh [Sen.-R-MO]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4069 — A bill to direct the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish definitions, standards, resources, and frameworks to ensure certain biological datasets are ready for use in artificial intelligence models, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Young, Todd [Sen.-R-IN]; Committees: Senate - Commerce, Science, and Transportation

S.4070 — A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Young, Todd [Sen.-R-IN]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.4076 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate the 190-day lifetime limit on inpatient psychiatric hospital services under the Medicare Program; Sponsor: Cassidy, Bill [Sen.-R-LA]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.4085 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prevent hospitals or skilled nursing facilities that are owned by certain firms from participating in the Medicare program; Sponsor: Murphy, Christopher [Sen.-D-CT]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.4086 — A bill to establish protections for health care providers who raise concerns about the quality of health care services, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Murphy, Christopher [Sen.-D-CT]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

H.Res.1112 — Supporting the goals and ideals of “Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism Awareness Month”; Sponsor: Murphy, Gregory F. [Rep.-R-NC-3]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.Con.Res.78 — Expressing support for the recognition of March 10, 2026, as “Abortion Provider Appreciation Day”; Sponsor: Pressley, Ayanna [Rep.-D-MA-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Judiciary

H.R.7895 — To amend section 408 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to prohibit kickbacks to pharmacy benefit managers; Sponsor: Allen, Rick W. [Rep.-R-GA-12]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

H.R.7902 — To provide that the approved application under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act for the drug mifepristone for the purpose of the termination of intrauterine pregnancy is deemed to have been withdrawn, to establish a Federal tort for harm to women caused by chemical abortion drugs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Harshbarger, Diana [Rep.-R-TN-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Judiciary

H.R.7905 — To amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Joyce, John [Rep.-R-PA-13]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7906 — To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish and administer a pilot program to provide grants to support Food is Medicine programs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Kelly, Robin L. [Rep.-D-IL-2]; Committees: House - Agriculture; Energy and Commerce

H.R.7907 — To direct the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology to facilitate the establishment of definitions, standards, resources, and frameworks to ensure certain biological datasets are ready for use in artificial intelligence models, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Khanna, Ro [Rep.-D-CA-17]; Committees: House - Science, Space, and Technology

H.R.7909 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an option for individuals who are ages 50 to 64 to buy into Medicare, to provide for health insurance market stabilization, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Krishnamoorthi, Raja [Rep.-D-IL-8]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7911 — To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living, to establish a program under which the Secretary will award grants to nonprofit organizations to carry out programs and activities intended to promote caregiver wellness, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Lawler, Michael [Rep.-R-NY-17]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

H.R.7912 — To require providers to disclose policies regarding the minimum gestational age at which life-saving care will

be provided to an infant in the case of a premature birth; Sponsor: Mackenzie, Ryan [Rep.-R-PA-7]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7920 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prevent hospitals or skilled nursing facilities that are owned by certain firms from participating in the Medicare program; Sponsor: Scanlon, Mary Gay [Rep.-D-PA-5]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

H.R.7931 — To amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to exempt from preemption certain State laws related to dental benefits; Sponsor: Van Drew, Jefferson [Rep.-R-NJ-2]; Committees: House - Education and Workforce

H.R.7933 — To amend title 10, United States Code, to expand the authority to provide a wig and treat traction alopecia under the TRICARE program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Watson Coleman, Bonnie [Rep.-D-NJ-12]; Committees: House - Armed Services