



Health Care Weekly Preview

Week of December 11th

This week, Republican efforts to pass a tax reform package is likely to come to a head with the clock running out on 2017. The Conference Committee will meet on Wednesday in hopes of putting the finishing touches on a bill that would then have to be passed again by the House & Senate. Senator Susan Collins [told](#) a Sunday news program that her vote was not final, in light of the news that the House may not consider ACA fixes to counteract the repeal of the individual mandate. The Senate tax bill got 51 votes (with Senator Corker (TN) as the only Republican to vote no). Do Senate Republicans need Susan Collins' vote on the tax bill? We will know when results come in from Alabama tomorrow night.

Meanwhile, Congress still must find a path forward on a government funding bill after passing a short-term extension last week through December 22nd. The short-term extension last week included relief for states who are close to exhausting funding for their CHIP program. While all signs still point to Congress passing the CHIP minibus before the year is out, the final details for those provisions are heavily dependent on the broader government funding agreement.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

On Wednesday (12/13), the House E&C Health Subcommittee will hold a hearing titled, "Examining the Drug Supply Chain." Click [here](#) for more information.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

On Tuesday (12/12), the Senate HELP Committee will hold a hearing titled, "The Cost of Prescription Drugs: An Examination of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Report "Making Medicine Affordable: A National Imperative." Click [here](#) for more information.

On Wednesday (12/13), the Senate HELP Committee will hold a hearing titled, "Implementation of the 21st Century Cures Act: Responding to Mental Health Needs." Click [here](#) for more information.

MACPAC

On Thursday (12/14), the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission will hold its December Meeting. Click [here](#) for more information.

THE CLOCK IS STILL TICKING

How long will it take for the House and Senate to play nice? Mark Walker, Chairman of the Republican Study Committee, told reporters last week that there will be "no CSRs, no DACA, no debt limit" in a year-end spending deal. Senator Collins said she has spoken with the White House and other Republicans supportive of CSRs and is confident that commitments will be kept.

Where will Democrats draw lines in the sand that could lead to a government shut down? Senator Schumer and Leader Pelosi prioritized parity between defense and non-defense spending relative to the budget caps. If Democrats win that concession, can they stand down on DACA? CHIP only becomes a threshold issue if Republicans try to leave town without extending it.

The Big Five – McConnell, Ryan, Schumer, Pelosi, and President Trump – will almost certainly meet again. How this meeting goes will have implications for every issue that may be included in a year-end spending deal.

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