

Viewpoints

ML Strategies Health Care Preview

WEEK OF JANUARY 7, 2019

There is still no end in sight to the government shutdown which is entering its 17th day. How policymakers find an exit ramp to this latest impasse will have lasting implications on the 116th Congress. Compromise can often be a dirty word in politics. Should the Democratic leaders offer any concession that doesn't sit well with the progressive base, they risk inflaming the fragile alliance that exists before this Congress even gets underway.

The President could concede that the [House-passed continuing resolution](#) is something he would sign, but without achieving some level of funding for a border wall, he risks losing confidence of key leaders within the GOP, perhaps even the base itself. The shutdown could be ended with some degree of compromise, but that is hard to achieve when compromise comes with so much political risk.

In the meantime, the Money Follows the Person program hangs in the balance while the shutdown showdown drags on. It was ready to move in the December 19th Senate-passed bill and in the House-passed bill last week. While good signs, it still has to be in something signed by the President.

POLLING IN HEALTH CARE

The recent [Politico-Harvard poll](#) is very important for capturing the volatility in the health care atmosphere. The poll showed that in the current election cycle and into governing afterwards, successful messaging means everything. Be it Medicare for All, lowering drug pricing, or even fixing the ACA (which received 76% support in the poll), if parties and candidates craft a message that captures the intensity of beliefs in the poll, that could be the pathway to winning elections and ultimately making policy in the future.

That said, one should always be careful in attributing too much to polling data. The Politico-Harvard Poll also showed that 46% say limiting Medicaid enrollment should be a priority, while 70% say increasing Medicaid enrollment should be a priority on the very next question. So it may not be fair to call these deeply held beliefs.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

No health care hearings scheduled.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

No health care hearings scheduled.

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MLSDCHealth@mintz.com

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TEAM

Rodney Whitlock

Connie Garner

Frank Guinta

Alex Hecht

Katie Weider

Eli Greenspan

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