



Health and Human Services Committee Standing Committee Update

August 5, 2020

From Congress

Update on Federal COVID-19 Response Legislation (July 27, 2020)

The House passed a fourth coronavirus (COVID-19) relief bill in May, called the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act. The bill included about \$3 trillion in aid and included several health or human services provisions that can be found in this [summary](#). In late July, the Senate introduced its next COVID-19 relief bill, the [Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools \(HEALS\) Act](#), which would provide roughly \$1 trillion in aid. The two chambers are currently in negotiations on the fourth stimuli bill.

Appropriations Committee Approves Labor, HHS, Education Budget for FY 2021 (July 13, 2020)

The House Appropriations Committee passed a [Labor-HHS-Education](#) funding bill to be used through fiscal year 2021. Funding amounts to \$2.4 billion above the fiscal year 2020 budget, and an additional \$24.425 billion in emergency spending to support the health care system for improved preparedness.

From the Administration

Executive Order on Child Welfare (June 24, 2020)

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on strengthening the child welfare system. The order included studying the Multiethnic Placement Act, encouraging partnerships between state agencies and private organizations particularly with faith-based and community organizations and increasing resources for caregivers and youth. It also included increasing data collection and analysis on several items including: demographic information for children in foster care, several currently available foster families and their demographic information, retention rates for foster families, target number of foster homes needed, and the average length of time it takes to complete foster and adoptive home certifications. Read [more](#).

Executive Order on Prescription Drug Initiatives (July 24, 2020)

The president signed several executive orders dealing with prescription drug pricing and practices. Among the actions outlined: requirements that federal qualified health centers purchasing insulins and epinephrine in the 340B program pass savings from discounted prices directly to underserved patients, finalizing a rule allowing states to develop safe importation plans for certain drugs, and creating a pathway for safe personal importation through the use of individual waivers. Read [more](#).

CMS Proposed Rule on Value-Based Purchasing Arrangements (VBPs) Closed (July 22, 2020)

The agency's [proposed rule](#) would support states' flexibility to enter into value-based purchasing arrangements' (VBPs) with prescription drug manufacturers, and offer manufacturers regulatory support to enter VBPs with payers including for Medicaid programs. It would also update how states, private plans and manufacturers pay for drugs based on clinical effectiveness and creates minimum standards in state Medicaid drug utilization review programs. The rule has [received mixed reactions](#) from industry stakeholders.

One-Year Anniversary of American Kidney Health Initiative (July 10, 2020)

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) marked the [one-year](#) anniversary of the signing of an executive order to advance American kidney health.

CDC Training on Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) Released (July 2020)

The agency announced a [new training](#) series for health care providers, including an interactive model to assist them with tips, tools and resources. The training also aims to help state health departments and prescription drug monitoring program ([PDMP](#)) managers improve opioid prescribing practices and reduce opioid-related harms.

From the Courts

State Attorneys General Filed Brief on ACA Exchanges (July 1, 2020)

HHS Secretary Alex Azar declined to open a special enrollment period for individuals to buy health insurance on federally operated health exchanges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fourteen attorneys general, led by California, [filed a brief](#) with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in support of Chicago's lawsuit to force Azar to open the exchanges.

NCSL Supreme Court Roundup Webinars

Several significant rulings came down from the U.S. Supreme Court this summer. You can view two archived webinars that provide summary and analysis of these rulings including part one [here](#) and part two [here](#).

Spotlight On:

[NCSL HHS Committee State-Federal Resources for COVID-19](#)

NCSL Blog: "[COVID-19 Confusion: Update on Coverage for Testing, Treatment](#)"

"Our American States" NCSL Podcast "[COVID-19: Searching for a Vaccine](#)"

NCSL Webinars:

July 29 Virtual Meeting | "[COVID-19: Child Welfare Placements in an Uncertain Time](#)"

July 31 Webinar | "[COVID-19: How Crisis Further Complicates Behavioral Health](#)"



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Denver: 303-364-7700

Washington: 202-624-5400