

LCAO Health Committee Meeting Minutes

November 28, 2017

1. **Tax update, activities.** The committee shared intel and timing on the tax bill being voted on this week. The deficit increase would put immense pressure on Medicare and Medicaid and we're likely to see cuts outlined in House Budget Resolution.
 - PAYGO cuts: If PAYGO is not waived, automatic cuts to Medicare, SHIPs, ACA Prevention and Public Health Fund, low-income outreach funding, etc. will take effect next year.
 - [CRS on Budget Enforcement Procedures: The Senate Pay-As-You-Go \(PAYGO\) Rule](#)
 - [CBO Effects of legislation that would raise deficits by an estimated \\$1.5 trillion over the 2018-2027 period](#)
 - Repeal of medical expense deduction is not currently in Senate bill
2. **Health Extenders bill:** Bipartisan agreement on making therapy caps permanent and extending low-income outreach for 2 years. Some differences between House and Senate on length of extensions. Could be part of year-end package or CR but the big hurdle is offsets for all of the healthcare provisions.
3. **Medicaid HCBS Money Follows the Person bill:** Portman-Cantwell bill has not been introduced, language calls for \$2.2 billion 5-year extension. Hoping it will make it into year-end package. LCAO included the extension request in our letter to the Hill on extenders over the summer. Look for a non-LCAO sign-on once the bill is introduced.
4. **Appropriations Update:** The Committee discussed the various scenarios for FY18 appropriations. The current CR will expire December 8th. Don't expect a government shutdown but it's still unclear whether Congress will pass a short (2 week) CR, a 3-month CR leading to an omnibus in March. Also unclear whether extenders might be included in any of these CRs.
 - **Medicare SHIP funding:** For FY18, the Senate Appropriations Committee has proposed funding SHIP at the FY17 level of \$47.1 million, rejecting the House and Administration proposals to eliminate funding entirely. However, this level falls short of the \$52.1 million appropriated for the program in FY16 and for many years prior. To reiterate our collective message to appropriators earlier this year, we revised the non-LCAO [July 2017 letter](#) that 79 organizations signed to urge the rejection of the proposed elimination of SHIP. The revised letter thanks the Senate for level-funding SHIP, but reiterate the advocacy in the July letter for restoring the program to \$52.1 million, in the event that a deal is reached to raise the BCA caps. We are requesting that organizations that signed on to the July letter let us know if they choose to [opt out](#) of this latest letter, and we [invite other organizations to sign on](#). The deadline for responding is [COB on Tuesday, December 5](#), and Marci Phillips (marci.phillips@ncoa.org) is the contact.
5. **Medicare Part D appeals auto-escalation sign-on letter**
 - Medicare Part C appeals to independent review entities (IREs) are much higher than under Part D because Part C appeals are escalated automatically to IREs. Non-LCAO letter urges treatment of Part D appeals like Part C.
6. **Proposed rule on Medicare Parts C and D policy changes (comments due Jan. 16):** The Committee briefly discussed some of the provisions in the proposed rule which builds off of previous RFIs and implements CARA. As with previous rules and RFI's under this administration, the theme is reducing

regulatory burden, especially for providers. Several LCAO members will be commenting, including Center for Medicare Advocacy, Justice in Aging, and NCOA. Please reach out if you would like to collaborate. See this [CMS fact sheet](#) for more information.

7. Other Announcements

- Alex Azar's nomination for HHS Secretary. Senate HELP hearing this week but Finance hearing has not yet been scheduled.
- Connecticut is cutting back their Medicare Savings Program eligibility. 80,000 people could lose their MSPs that help with Medicare premiums & co-pays

Next Meeting: We will not meet on the 4th Tuesday next month (December 26th) but may schedule a call before the holidays.