

2024 Election Outlook & 2025 Congressional Preview

In an era of political division, the upcoming November elections have high stakes, and the outcome is impossible to predict. The polls have consistently shown Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump to be running dead even with expectations that a handful of states, or even one congressional district in Nebraska, will determine the winner. Beyond the presidential race, the fight for control of the House and the Senate is also a complete toss-up. At this point, the only thing that is certain is that the margins of victory are likely to be slim, and no party will have a clear mandate from the American people.

In this memo, we try to make sense of the political uncertainty by comparing the policy positions of each Presidential candidate on key health and healthcare social issues, forecasting the health policy priorities of the 119th Congress, and identifying potentially new leaders of key Congressional Committees.

2024 Presidential Policy Platforms

Below, we outline policy positions of Presidential candidates based on their comments, actions taken in both the Biden and Trump presidencies, as well as positions outlined by the [Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) platforms. We also looked at Project 2025 which outlines an approach to federal government if a GOP candidate is elected as President. In particular, [Project 2025's chapter 14](#) proposes conservatives' policies for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is written by Roger Severino, who served as Director of the Office of Civil Rights at HHS during the Trump Administration. While former President Trump has tried to distance himself from Project 2025, the authors of the document are some of the most conservative members of the party and cannot be discredited or ignored given their roles in the previous Trump Administration and the potential for them to serve again in a future Trump presidency.

Harris-Walz Administrative Priorities

Overall, a Harris-Walz Administration can be expected to continue the health care priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration. This includes ensuring access to reproductive health care and family planning, continuing an Administration-wide focus on equity, strengthening and expanding the Affordable Care Act to improve the quality and affordability of health care coverage, cracking down on anti-competitive practices, and continuing to expand the list of prescription drugs eligible for Medicare price negotiation. A priority will be to extend the enhanced ACA premium tax credit, and Medicaid expansion. A Harris-Walz Administration may also engage in additional Medicare Advantage oversight and further pursue appropriate AI regulations. As part of its economic platform, the Harris-Walz campaign notes it will [protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare](#). Similar to the [Biden-Harris Administration](#), policies to boost the trust fund likely include raising Medicare taxes on those making more than \$400,000 a year, closing tax loopholes, and achieving program savings through Medicare drug reforms.

Trump-Vance Administrative Priorities

The main goal of a Trump-Vance Administration will be to roll back many of the administrative actions undertaken during the Biden Administration. In the Republican Party Platform ([page 11](#)), it states that a the “Republicans will reinstate President Trump’s Deregulation Policies...and end Democrats’ regulatory onslaught.” As part of the deregulation plan, we can expect a reversal in many of the actions the Biden Administration undertook, including reproductive health care protections, gender protections, social determinants of health advancements, and protections against climate change. In Project 2025 ([page 449](#)), the authors specifically criticize the Biden Administration for “promoting equity in everything we do” for the sake of “populations sharing a particular characteristic” including race, sexuality, gender identification, ethnicity, and a host of other categories. Whereas the Biden-Harris Administration made it a priority to maintain equity among all Americans, we can expect a Trump-Vance Administration to roll back these regulations. As part of the “deregulation” agenda, we can expect a return to the Trump Administration [practice](#) in which for every one regulation that was created, two others must be removed. In recent campaign rhetoric, Trump even floated the idea that 10 regulations should be removed for every new rule introduced.

One of the first priorities in a Trump Administration will be to extend the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which expires at the end of 2025. According to the Committee for a Responsible Budget, extending the expiring individual and estate tax provisions alone would increase primary deficits by [\\$3.9 trillion](#) through 2035. Reviving, extending, or avoiding a variety of business tax changes could increase that deficit impact to [\\$4.8 trillion](#).

Table 1. Comparison of Health Policy Positions of Presidential Candidates

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
Traditional Medicare & Medicare Advantage (MA)	
<p>We expect a Harris-Walz Administration would largely continue the current Administration’s positions on the Medicare program. A Harris-Walz Administration may look for opportunities to further enhance MA oversight and program integrity measures as well as expand traditional coverage.</p> <p>As part of its economic platform, the Harris-Walz campaign notes it will protect and strengthen Social Security and Medicare. Similar to the Biden-Harris Administration, policies to boost the trust fund likely include raising Medicare taxes on those making more than \$400,000 a year, closing tax loopholes, and achieving program savings through Medicare drug reforms.</p>	<p>The Trump Republican platform (p. 10, 12) proposes to protect and strengthen the Medicare program as well. While the former President’s 2024 campaign has not released detailed Medicare policy proposals, we expect a Trump-Vance Administration to follow a similar approach to the first Trump Administration. This could include policies to reduce administrative burden on providers, encourage innovation, and reduce program costs by expanding site neutrality or instituting drug pricing reforms. These policies are in alignment with those detailed in Project 2025 (p. 463), which also calls for reinstating policies from the previous Administration that were withdrawn, weakened, or never finalized.</p>

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
<p>Building on the Biden Administration's EO, the Harris-Walz platform also asserts it will expand high-quality home care services for seniors and people with disabilities. The EO informed the current Administration's testing of a new dementia care model and development of the controversial nursing home minimum staffing standards rule.</p>	<p>While friendlier towards MA than a Harris Administration, a second Trump Administration would likely similarly pursue enhanced oversight and program integrity measures, especially given Congressional concerns regarding practices such as overly restrictive prior authorizations. Conservatives are also eager to expand MA as a means of transitioning away from fee-for-service Medicare towards a more value-based system.</p> <p>The Trump Republican platform includes support for long-term care and in-home care for seniors (p. 12). The platform also notes a focus on chronic disease prevention and management, including expanding primary care.</p>
Medicaid	
<p>The Biden-Administration has urged states to continue to expand Medicaid eligibility including through the adoption of Medicaid expansion under the ACA. CMS has focused on eligibility and enrollment systems and directed state Medicaid Directors to improve them. State flexibilities during the PHE unwind have been extended as that process continues. The more inclusive Medicaid eligibility is, and the more enrollment processes are streamlined, the better individuals and families can access Medicaid coverage and care. Similarly, the more robust the benefit packages offered and the greater the protections to ensure network adequacy, the better the care. The Biden Administration advanced regulations in a multitude of areas related to Medicaid including adequate access to care.</p> <p>The Biden Administration has encouraged states to pursue innovative approaches to improving health including efforts to address the social determinants of health. During the current Administration, waivers have been used to adopt 12-month postpartum Medicaid coverage, continuous coverage for children, enhanced</p>	<p>A Trump Administration advocates for limiting federal funding through altered match rates and/or block grants, aggregated caps, or per capita caps. This would negatively impact health by limiting enrollment, access and/or care.</p> <p>As detailed in Chapter 14, Project 2025 advocates for Medicaid policy change that includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform financing including a more balanced or blended match rate, block grants, aggregated caps, or per capita caps. • Incentivize states to increase their efforts to decrease waste, fraud and abuse by using the current 90/10 matching rate for IT systems for fraud and abuse prevention. • Altered Medicaid eligibility processes including holding states accountable for improper eligibility determinations, requiring more robust eligibility determinations, and strengthening asset test determinations in Medicaid.

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
<p>coverage for individuals transitioning in and out of the justice system, expanded access to home and community-based services, and more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct oversight and reform of managed care. • Incentivize personal responsibility by requiring able-bodied adults to contribute to the cost of their coverage and also give them a choice among multiple health plans including private options. • Add work requirements for able bodies adult plus targeted time limits or lifetime caps on Medicaid benefits as a means of disincentivizing permanent dependence. • Allow Medicaid benefit redesign without waivers including flexibility to for states to eliminate mandatory and optional benefit requirements. Allow states to redesign eligibility, financing and service delivery for long term care. • Eliminate current waiver and state plan processes.
Reproductive Health	
<p>With Vice President Harris leading the reproductive health agenda, a Harris-Walz Administration can be expected to increase its focus on reproductive rights and improving access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care. As President, Harris would sign a bill that restores reproductive freedom nationwide, though Congress is unlikely to pass such a bill.</p>	<p>Former President Trump prefers states decide abortion policy. He wants to mandate that either the government or insurance companies pay for IVF treatments. A Trump-Vance administration would likely revive Trump-era policies that undermine access to reproductive health care, such as the Title X “gag rule” and broader religious and moral exemptions allowing employers to drop contraceptive coverage.</p>
Maternal Health	
<p>The U.S. has the highest maternal mortality rate of any wealthy nation, and Black, American Indian, Alaska Native, and rural women experience maternal death and disability at exponentially higher rates than their white and urban counterparts. Like the Biden-Harris Administration, Harris-Walz will continue to make addressing the maternal health crisis,</p>	<p>A second Trump Administration would likely focus on maternal health broadly, with emphasis on improving outcomes in rural areas. The former president signed the Preventing Maternal Deaths Act (H.R. 1318) into law in 2018.</p> <p>In comparison to the Biden-Harris Administration, Trump-Vance is likely to place</p>

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
<p>improving maternal health and eliminating maternal health disparities a top priority.</p> <p>This includes building upon the approach outlined in the White House Blueprint for Addressing the Maternal Health Crisis; supporting and urging additional states to adopt 12-months of post-partum Medicaid coverage; continuing to invest in the Maternal Mental Health Hotline (1-833-TLC-MAMA) and other maternal mental health efforts; advancing the birthing-friendly designation for hospitals that was created during the Biden-Harris Administration; implementing CMS' first federal health and safety requirements for maternal emergency and obstetric services in hospitals; expanding the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research (Executive Order), and more.</p>	<p>less focus on the inequities that drive racial disparities in maternal health outcomes.</p> <p>GOP proposals to limit Medicaid funding through block grants and other approaches will limit the positive impact of the 12-months postpartum Medicaid coverage that has been adopted in 47 states since 2021. Similarly, Trump opposition to investing in health-related social needs through Medicaid demonstrations – approaches that are known to positively impact maternal health – could also hinder progress that is currently underway.</p> <p>A Trump-Vance Administration is likely to continue investments in maternal mortality review committees. It remains to be seen whether they would defend legal challenges that currently put the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act at risk.</p>
Health Equity	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration would build upon the Biden Administration's focus on health equity, characterized by a comprehensive approach to dismantling systemic barriers in health and health care. Sample initiatives would likely include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Protections for Marginalized Groups:</i> Defending lawsuits filed against the federal government that seek to remove protections against discrimination including challenges against implementation of section 1557 of the ACA. • <i>Diversity in Healthcare:</i> Emphasizing the need for a diverse healthcare workforce to better represent and serve historically marginalized communities. • <i>Addressing Pay Disparities:</i> Tackling inequities in healthcare compensation that 	<p>A Trump-Vance Administration would likely seek to reverse many of the advancements made under the Biden-Harris administration. Expected action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diminished Federal Support for Equity Initiatives:</i> Without robust federal programs addressing health disparities, progress in areas such as research, maternal health, mental health access, and chronic disease management for marginalized groups would likely stagnate. • <i>Minimal Focus on Marginalized Communities:</i> The Trump administration is expected to maintain a limited agenda regarding health equity, with little to no initiatives aimed at addressing racial equity, supporting LGBTQ+ individuals or safeguarding anti-

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
<p>directly impact health outcomes for women and minority groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medicaid Expansion:</i> Continuing efforts to expand Medicaid access, ensuring that low-income and postpartum individuals receive necessary healthcare services. • <i>Equity Action Plans:</i> Continued implementation of federal agency equity action plans. 	<p>discrimination protections under section 1557 of the ACA.</p> <p><i>Reduction in Medicaid and ACA Funding:</i> Although Trump has pledged not to cut Medicare, his policies may lead to reduced federal spending on Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act. This could limit access to vital services for low-income populations, exacerbating existing disparities.</p>
Competition/Transparency/Site Neutrality	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration can be expected to continue to President Biden’s focus on anti-competitive practices in health care. Specifically, the Departments of Justice, HHS, and the Federal Trade Commission put out an RFI earlier this year and a December 2023 announcement outlining efforts to lower health care and drug costs, while promoting competition to benefit patients and health care workers.</p> <p>The Democratic platform (page 18) specifically states their intent to “continue to use antitrust laws to stop hospital, insurance, and Big Pharma mergers that undermine competition and increase health care prices for consumers.”</p>	<p>Many of the hospital and health plan price transparency rules currently under discussion are an extension of what was promulgated by the Trump Administration.</p> <p>The GOP party platform pledges to “increase transparency, promote choice and competition, and expand access to new affordable healthcare and prescription drug options (page 15, GOP Party Platform).”</p> <p>Project 2025 (page 464) specifically states that “regulations should advance site neutrality by eliminating the inpatient-only list and expanding the ambulatory surgical center covered procedures list...CMS should expand the application of site-neutral payment options to more settings. Such a policy would level the playing field among providers and remove the financial disabilities for medical professionals who would compete with hospital systems.”</p>
Prescription Drugs	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration will continue the prescription drug priorities started by the Biden Administration, including implementing the Inflation Reduction Act, and expanding those</p>	<p>A Trump-Vance Administration will likely revisit proposals from his prior Administration, including a Most Favored Nation or international pricing index model, as well as addressing rebates.</p>

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<p>policies to the commercial market. Specifically, Harris supports extending the \$35 insulin cap and the \$2000 annual out-of-pocket cap to commercial plans and accelerating the speed of Medicare drug price negotiations.</p>	<p>Trump has also indicated in his platform that he will expand access to new prescription drug options.</p>
ACA and Private Health Insurance Coverage	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration can be expected to continue President Biden’s focus to protect and strengthen the ACA and expand access to and improve the quality of coverage and make coverage more affordable. Regarding the Marketplace, their priorities include making enhancements to premium tax credits permanent, increasing funding for marketing and enrollment assistance, and ensuring program integrity. A Harris-Walz Administration would also continue to implement the No Surprises Act and enforce mental health parity requirements.</p>	<p>A Trump-Vance Administration may try to repeal or undermine the ACA, including through Trump-era policies to reduce funding for marketing and enrollment assistance, terminating payments for cost-sharing reductions, and weakening guardrails for 1332 waivers. Republicans strongly oppose extending enhancements to premium tax credits.</p> <p>Project 2025 (page 469) proposes ways to loosen regulations on private health insurance and expand options for coverage through association health plans, short-term, limited duration health plans, and health reimbursement arrangements. Project 2025 recommends replacing the independent dispute resolution process with a “truth-in-advertising approach” that would allow parties to resolve disputes themselves without an arbiter.</p>
Mental & Behavioral Health	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration would likely continue to invest significantly in addressing the nation’s mental health crisis and reducing opioid overdoses. The Biden Administration launched the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline and issued new strategic plans to address maternal mental health, suicide prevention, and called for increased reform to the criminal justice system to support people who inject drugs.</p> <p>The Democratic platform (page 73) calls for increased access to high quality behavioral health services and support for workforce development</p>	<p>A Trump-Vance Administration would likely propose changes to Medicaid and Marketplace plans (See Medicaid and ACA and Private Health Insurance Coverage sections for further detail) that would have significant impact and potentially decrease access to behavioral health services for Medicaid beneficiaries and those enrolled in Marketplace plans. The Republican platform (page 8) also promises to “seal the border” and increase penalties for illegal immigration as it relates to drug policy.</p>

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<p>and incentive programs. The platform highlight’s Democratic efforts to secure permanent funding for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, expand school-based mental health services, ensure mental health parity.</p>	<p>President Trump has also advocated for institutional care for unhoused individuals with mental illness, stating that, “And for those who are severely mentally ill and deeply disturbed, we will bring them back to mental institutions, where they belong, with the goal of reintegrating them back into society once they are well enough to manage”</p>
Health Care Workforce	
<p>A Harris-Walz Administration can be expected to maintain the Biden Administration’s approach to growing the health care workforce. The Democratic party platform outlines the goal to invest in programs that train primary care practitioners, registered nurses, mental health specialists, and others to work across our health care system, including in rural and low-income areas.</p>	<p>The Republican platform does not include any policies to address the health care workforce shortage. However, Project 2025 calls for policies that would increase the supply of health care providers, such as increased telehealth access and interstate licensure (a historically state matter), including for volunteers wishing to provide temporary, charitable services across state lines. The document further encourages flexibility in modes of health care delivery, including less expensive alternatives to hospitals and telehealth independent of expensive air ambulances.</p> <p>It is also likely that the Trump Administration would reverse the Nursing Home Minimum Staffing Standards regulation recently implemented by the Biden Administration. Several lawsuits have been filed and legislation has passed the Energy & Commerce Committee that would reverse the rule.</p>
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	
<p>VP Harris supports comprehensive regulation and government oversight to address AI risks, such as bias, deepfakes, and disinformation. She has played a key role in securing voluntary commitments from major AI companies to ensure responsible AI innovation and safety. Harris has emphasized the importance of mitigating AI’s risks while promoting innovation, protecting</p>	<p>Trump seeks to repeal Biden’s AI executive order, viewing it as a hindrance to AI innovation, and supports an AI strategy focused on “free speech and human flourishing,” according to the GOP platform (page 14).</p> <p>The focus of Project 2025 on AI is preventing China’s leadership on AI, and limiting Chinese</p>

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<p>privacy, advancing civil rights, and ensuring AI's development benefits workers and consumers. Her leadership has been pivotal in shaping the administration's AI safety and equity policies. A Harris-Walz Administration would likely build and expand on Biden's AI efforts.</p> <p>Furthermore, the DNC platform (page 73) emphasizes regulating AI to protect rights, privacy, equity, and security. Initiatives like President Biden's Executive Order on AI safety, the AI Bill of Rights, and combating algorithmic discrimination highlight efforts to manage AI's societal risks and ensure it serves the public interest. The platform supports advancing AI through initiatives like the AI Talent Surge and the AI Safety Institute, prioritizing funding for AI research and development to ensure safe, secure AI technologies, while advocating for economic fairness, especially in workplaces where AI is used.</p>	<p>involvement in American AI companies. Project 2025 also states that AI should be developed to reduce and prevent Medicare fraud (page 463).</p>
Nutrition	
<p>A Harris-Walz administration would likely continue the Biden-Harris administration's support for federal nutrition programs. This includes increasing access to and funding for SNAP, WIC, school meals, and other food programs with a focus on equity. For example, the Department of Agriculture implemented summer nutrition programs for children and the first increase in the value of SNAP benefits. A Harris-Walz Administration would also continue the work that has followed from the White House Conference on Nutrition, Hunger, and Health, including the Food is Medicine initiative.</p> <p>Governor Walz signed a bill into law in Minnesota to provide universal school meals.</p>	<p>A Trump-Vance Administration can be expected to focus less on improving access and equity in nutrition programs. Similar to the previous Trump Administration, they may focus on increasing work requirements in SNAP, limiting the community eligibility provision (CEP) for school meals, and restricting the types of foods that can be purchased in SNAP based on nutrition. A Trump-Vance Administration would also focus more on the intersection of nutrition programs and agriculture through programs like Farm to School. Food is Medicine has Republican support in Congress and could also be advanced by a Trum-Vance Administration.</p> <p>Neither the Republican platform nor Project 2025 mention nutrition or federal nutrition programs.</p>

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
Housing	
<p>VP Harris' policy proposal for lowering housing costs includes a plan to build 3 million new homes in the next four years to address the housing shortage and reduce costs for both renters and homeowners; a historic expansion of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and introduces a new tax incentive for homebuilders to build starter homes for first-time buyers; builds upon the Biden-Harris administration's innovation fund by proposing \$40 billion to support local solutions for increasing housing supply, innovative construction financing, and affordable home development; and offering up to \$25,000 in downpayment support for first-time homebuyers.</p> <p>Additionally, the DNC platform follows a "Housing First" approach, emphasizing housing as a first step to rebuilding lives, and prioritizes expanding rental assistance and housing for homeless populations. The platform also pledges to crack down on corporate landlords, rental price gouging, and unfair fees, including by capping rent increases in LIHTC properties. Furthermore, the platform outlines plans to expand housing assistance for veterans as part of broader rental assistance programs.</p>	<p>The GOP platform (page 14) focuses on reducing mortgage rates by cutting inflation, promotes homeownership through tax incentives, and supports home construction on federal lands. The platform also advocates redirecting resources from services for undocumented immigrants to support homeless veterans, and reducing regulations seen as driving up housing costs.</p> <p>Project 2025's proposals for HUD reform focus on curbing bureaucratic overreach by placing politically appointed leadership in key HUD positions, reducing regulatory measures like climate change initiatives, and reversing progressive policies, including Biden-era programs like Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) and the Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE) initiative. It also advocates for stricter eligibility for housing assistance, prioritizing citizens over noncitizens, encouraging homeownership through wealth-building short-term mortgages, and increasing flexibility for states and localities in land use and public housing management, while de-emphasizing federal intervention in local housing markets.</p>
Economic Opportunity	
<p>Building a strong middle class is a primary goal of the Harris-Walz Administration. VP Harris most recently outlined her economic position in a speech in Pennsylvania. It is also outlined in chapters one, two, and three of the Democratic platform including expanding good jobs, investing in small businesses, reducing poverty, lowering family taxes, and lowering costs across the board.</p> <p>Her Administration plans to advocate for several initiatives including making the child tax credit</p>	<p>The \$4 trillion 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act expires at the end of 2025. A Trump-Vance Administration is in favor of renewing and potentially expanding these. The GOP platform emphasizes building the <i>greatest economy</i> in history by reducing consumer prices, expanding tax cuts for workers, eliminating taxes on tips, and reinstating deregulation approaches from Trump's previous administration, which the platform asserts saved Americans \$11,000 per household.</p>

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<p>permanent; creating 12 weeks of national paid family and medical leave; implementing new tax breaks for 100 million Americans including a \$6,000 tax credit for parents during the first year of their child’s life; expanding fiscal incentives for new businesses and access to capital for small businesses; investing in apprenticeships; advocating for public-private partnerships; and making the enhanced APTCs permanent.</p> <p>A key vehicle for her economic priorities is the \$4 trillion 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which is set to expire December 31, 2025.</p>	<p>While President Trump supported paid family leave during his first Administration, the issue is not mentioned in the current GOP platform, leaving its status uncertain during a second potential term.</p>
Gun Safety & Firearm Violence Prevention	
<p>Harris and Walz are both strong advocates for firearm violence prevention and will likely take a stance that balances responsible gun ownership with evidence-based approaches to reducing firearm violence.</p> <p>As Vice President, Harris led the first White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention. The Biden-Harris Administration signed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act into law; finalized regulations strengthening background check, safe storage, and other evidence-based measures; and issued a Surgeon General’s Advisory declaring firearm violence a public health crisis. Most recently, on Sept. 26th, the White House signed an Executive Order on Combating Emerging Firearm Threats and Improving School-Based Active Shooter Drills, which includes a new Emerging Threats Task Force to address unserialized or undetectable 3D-printed guns and machine-gun conversion devises.</p> <p>On the campaign trail, Harris has underscored her support for the Second Amendment – highlighting her status as a gun-owner– while advocating for such measures as reinstating the assault weapons ban, banning high capacity</p>	<p>Former President Trump is a staunch supporter of gun rights and a second Trump term is likely to be similar to the first. He opposes bans on assault-style weapons and high-capacity magazines, and has limited federal gun regulations.</p> <p>The Republican Platform does not mention “gun” nor “firearm.” It advocates for policies that return America to “common sense” and places a top priority on “defending our constitution, our bill of rights, and... the right to keep and bear arms” (see pg. 6).</p> <p>In the face of mass gun violence in schools and elsewhere, former President Trump and Vice Presidential candidate Vance have said that such violence is a “fact of life” and “we have to learn to live with it.”</p>

Harris-Walz	Trump-Vance
<p>magazines, and passing universal background checks, safe storage laws, and a national red flag law. Additionally, per the platform (see pgs. 39-40), the Harris-Walz Administration aims to eliminate the gun industry’s immunity from liability and to increase funding for community violence interventions, gun violence research at the CDC and NIH, background checks at the FBI, and enforcement at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. A Harris-Walz Administration will continue this work.</p>	
Immigration	
<p>VP Harris has emphasized the need for comprehensive reform of the U.S. immigration system, advocating for a bipartisan border deal that includes increased funding for border agents, enhanced detention facilities, and improved fentanyl detection technology. She supports a mixed approach that combines strict border enforcement with provisions favored by immigration advocates.</p> <p>Proposed changes, echoed in the DNC platform (page 65) include raising the eligibility standards for asylum seekers, implementing a "protection determination" process for expedited cases, increasing ICE detention capacity, and creating pathways to citizenship for long-term undocumented individuals, including DACA recipients. Harris also aims to boost legal immigration through additional green cards and ensure adequate funding for asylum officers, border patrol, and legal assistance for vulnerable populations.</p>	<p>The GOP platform (page 12) pledges to restore Trump-era border policies, complete the border wall, shift federal resources toward immigration enforcement, and use advanced technology and military resources to stop illegal immigration, including deploying troops and naval forces for drug interception. Trump would prioritize merit-based immigration, ending chain migration, and implement strict deportation policies for illegal immigrants, including large-scale deportations and enhanced vetting to prevent extremists from entering the country.</p> <p>Project 2025 recommends immediately submitting notices of proposed rulemaking to withdraw the Biden Administration’s public charge regulations and reissuing the Trump Administration’s public charge rule. The platform specifically notes that it recommends reissuing the rule “including aspects from its original notice of proposed rulemaking” (page 145) which suggests there may be elements in the original proposed rule that were not included in the Trump Administration’s 2019 final rule that Project 2025 wants to include under a future Administration.</p>

2025 Congressional Preview

The outcomes of the November election will play a big part in the priorities of the next Congress. A divided Congress where one party controls the House, and the other party controls the Senate will likely limit productivity. If one party control both Houses of Congress, that party will set the agenda and be able to more easily advance their policy priorities. This is especially the case if the same party controls the White House. *It is important to note, however, that no matter what party controls the Houses of Congress, the margins are likely to be slim which will likely require bipartisanship to legislate.*

Budget Reconciliation

When both Congress and the White House are controlled by the same party, but the margin of control is slim, the only way for the controlling party to get through more partisan parts of their agenda is to rely on the budget reconciliation process. Reconciliation requires a simple majority vote in the Senate, rather than a 60-vote, filibuster proof threshold. This is how the Inflation Reduction Act was passed in 2022, and the Trump Tax cuts were passed in 2017. In order for a policy to be attached to a budget reconciliation bill, the Congressional Budget Act requires that it cause a change in spending, revenues, and/or the federal debt limit. This can include most “mandatory” or entitlement spending such as Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, and farm programs, though changing spending usually requires amending underlying statutes as well.

Congressional Priorities

In addition to the November election, key factors for health policymaking in 2025 are what Congress accomplishes (or does not accomplish) during the lame duck session. In addition to finishing the fiscal year (FY) 25 budget process, if Congress can move pending legislation, such as the Lower Cost More Transparency Act (LCMT), in 2024 they could preserve capacity for more complicated policy negotiations next year, when the new Congress will have a full plate. Not only will they need to pass the annual budget, which is always complicated, but the looming reinstatement of the debt limit on January 2, 2025, and the expiration of the Trump-era tax cuts and the ACA premium tax credits are all on the agenda for next year. The debt ceiling debate may complicate any policy negotiations. How long the Treasury Department can use extraordinary measures to prevent the United States from defaulting on its obligations is uncertain. In 2023, Treasury implemented extraordinary measures from January 19, 2023, to June 5, 2023.

If Congress does pass an end of the year package in 2024 that includes some of the transparency and PBM reforms that have been the priority of this Congress, there will still be plenty of health care policy to focus on next year. Lawmakers have already laid the groundwork to take on other issues including as [Medicare physician payment reform](#) and a [Next Generation CURES bill](#). Additionally, health care workforce, Medicare Advantage oversight, mental health legislation and, PAHPA reauthorization are all areas where members of both parties have shown an interest.

See Table 2 for a timeline of key dates in 2025 (i.e., windows for policymaking) and Table 2 for a list of policy priorities, organized into the following categories: areas of bipartisan from 2024 that may be carried

into 2025 if not featured in a lame duck package; and key policy areas that could be addressed in 2025 and beyond.

Table 2. Timeline of Key Dates in 2025

Date	Event or Deadline
January 2, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal debt limit reinstated; extraordinary measures will delay potential government default
April 30, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatic spending cuts will be triggered if Congress fails to pass all 12 regular appropriations bills by April 30 (FY 2023 levels minus 1 percent)
X date, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day on which Treasury Department exhausts extraordinary measures; timing is uncertain and depends on 2025 tax collections and cash on hand
September 30, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of FY 2025 Deadline to pass continuing resolution or government funding for FY 2026 to avert government shutdown
December 31, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expiration of enhancements to ACA premium tax credits; practically, issuers need to know in spring/summer 2025 to prepare plans for Open Enrollment beginning November 1, 2025 Expiration of various TCJA tax provisions

Table 3. Policy Priorities for Congress

Bipartisan Support for Policies in 2024 that May be Carried Over if not Included in Lame Duck	Policies to Possibly be Addressed in 2025 and Beyond
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health care transparency PBM policies Drug patents Medicare site-neutral payments Enhanced ACA premium tax credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 340B Artificial intelligence Cures 2.0 Maternal health workforce Medicare Part B physician payment Mental health parity Privacy Generic drug shortages Medicare Advantage PAHPA Reauthorization

Changes in Congressional Committees

With every new Congress comes changes in Committees based on retirements, losses, and new members. Below we highlight the four main committees of jurisdiction over health care and identify which members have announced they are retiring, seeking a new office, or are in a particularly difficult re-election campaign. An asterisk (*) denotes Health Subcommittee. The names of members are bolded if their membership may change.

The leadership of the Committees, for the most part, is expected to be the same, though the positions of Chair and Ranking Member will depend on the outcome of the election. The one exception is the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Both the current Chairperson, Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and the Health Subcommittee Ranking Member, Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA) are retiring. Rep. Bob Latta (R-OH) is the next most senior member in line to take over the Republican leadership position of the Committee, but Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) is also seeking the position. Rep. Guthrie is currently the Chair of the Health Subcommittee. It is expected that Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO), who will be the second most senior Democrat on the Committee after Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), will take the lead Democratic position on the Health Subcommittee.

Table 4. Senate Finance Committee Membership

Democrats	Republicans
Sen. Ron Wyden (OR) – Chairman	Senator Mike Crapo (ID) – Ranking Member
Sen. Debbie Stabenow (MI) – Retiring	Sen. Chuck Grassley (IA)*
Sen. Maria Cantwell (WA) In cycle, but safe	Sen. John Cornyn (TX)
Sen. Bob Menendez (NJ)* - Resigned	Sen. John Thune (SD)*
Sen. Thomas Carper (DE)*- Retiring	Sen. Tim Scott (SC)*
Sen. Ben Cardin (MD)*- Health Sub Chair, Retiring	Sen. Bill Cassidy (LA)*
Sen. Sherrod Brown (OH)- In cycle and at risk	Sen. James Lankford (OK)*
Sen. Michael Bennett (CO)	Sen. Steve Daines (MT) – Health Sub. RM*
Sen. Bob Casey (PA)*- In cycle and at risk	Sen. Todd Young (KS)*
Sen. Mark Warner (VA)*	Sen. John Barrasso (WY)* - In cycle but safe
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (RI)* In cycle but safe	Sen. Ron Johnson (WI)
Sen. Maggie Hassan (NH)*	Sen. Thom Tillis (NC)
Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (NV)*	Sen. Marsha Blackburn (TN)- In cycle but safe
Sen. Elizabeth Warren (MA)*- In cycle but safe	

Table 5. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Membership

Democrats	Republicans
Senator Bernie Sanders (VT) ¹ – Chair In cycle but safe	Senator Bill Cassidy (LA) – Ranking Member
Sen. Patty Murray (WA)*	Sen. Rand Paul (KY)*
Sen. Bob Casey (PA)- In cycle and at risk	Sen. Susan Collins (ME)*
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (WI)*- In cycle and at risk	Sen. Lisa Murkowski (AK)*
Sen. Chris Murphy (CT)*- In cycle but safe	Sen. Mike Braun (IN)*- In cycle but safe

¹ Technically an Independent but caucuses with Democrats.

Sen. Tim Kaine (VA)- In cycle but safe	Sen. Roger Marshall (KS)*- Ranking Member Health Subcommittee
Sen. Maggie Hassan (NH)*	Sen. Mitt Romney (UT)*- Retiring
Sen. Tina Smith (MN)*	Sen. Tommy Tuberville (AL)
Sen. Ben Ray Lujan (NM)*	Sen. Markwayne Mullin (OK)*- In cycle but safe
Sen. John Hickenlooper (CO)*	Sen. Ted Budd (NC)*
Sen. Edward Markey (MA)*- Chair, Health Subcommittee	

Table 6. House Ways and Means Committee Membership

Democrats	Republicans
Rep. Richard Neal (MA)- Ranking Member	Rep. Jason Smith (MO) - Chair
Rep. Lloyd Doggett (TX) – Health Subcommittee Ranking Member*	Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL) – Health Subcommittee Chair*
Rep. Mike Thompson (CA)*	Rep. Adrian Smith (NE)*
Rep. John Larson (CT)	Rep. Mike Kelly (PA)*
Rep. Earl Blumenauer (OR)*- Retiring	Rep. David Schweikert (AZ)- at risk
Rep. Bill Pascrell (NJ)- passed away	Rep. Darin LaHood (IL)
Rep. Danny Davis (IL)*	Rep. Brad Wenstrup (OH)*- Retiring
Rep. Linda Sanchez (CA)	Rep. Jodey Arrington (TX)
Rep. Steven Horsford (NV)	Rep. Drew Ferguson (GA)- Retiring
Rep. Terri Sewell (AL)*	Rep. Ron Estes (KS)
Rep. Suzan DelBene (WA)	Rep. Lloyd Smucker (PA)
Rep. Judy Chu (CA)*	Rep. Kevin Hern (OK)*
Rep. Gwen Moore (WI)	Rep. Carol Miller (WV)*
Rep. Dan Kildee (MI)- Retiring	Rep. Greg Murphy (NC)*
Rep. Don Beyer (VA)	Rep. David Kustoff (TN)
Rep. Dwight Evans (PA)*	Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (PA)*- at risk
Rep. Brad Schneider (IL)	Rep. Greg Steube (FL)
Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA)	Rep. Claudia Tenney (NY)*
	Rep. Michelle Fischbach (MN)
	Rep. Blake Moore (UT)*
	Rep. Michelle Steel (CA)*- at risk
	Rep. Beth Van Duyne (TX)
	Rep. Randy Feenstra (IA)
	Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (NY)
	Rep. Mike Carey (OH)

Table 7. House Energy and Commerce Committee Membership

Democrats	Republicans
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Rep. Frank Pallone (NJ) – Ranking Member*	Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA) – Chair*- Retiring
Rep. Anna Eshoo (CA) – Health Subcommittee Ranking Member*- Retiring	Rep. Michael Burgess (TX)*- Retiring
Rep. Diana DeGette (CO)	Rep. Bob Latta (OH)*
Rep. Jan Schakowsky (IL)	Rep. Brett Guthrie (KY) – Health Subcommittee Chair*
Rep. Doris Matsui (CA)	Rep Morgan Griffith (VA)*
Rep. Kathy Castor (FL)	Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL)*
Rep. John Sarbanes (MD)*- Retiring	Rep. Bill Johnson (OH)*
Rep. Paul Tonko (NY)	Rep. Larry Bucshon (IN) – Health Subcommittee Vice-Chair*- Retiring
Rep. Yvette Clark (NY)	Rep. Richard Hudson (NC)*
Rep. Tony Cardenas (CA)*- Retiring	Rep. Tim Walberg (MI)
Rep. Raul Ruiz (CA)*	Rep. Buddy Carter (GA)*
Rep. Scott Peters (CA)	Rep. Jeff Duncan (SC)- Retiring
Rep. Debbie Dingell (MI)*	Rep. Gary Palmer (AL)
Rep. Marc Veasey (TX)	Rep. Neal Dunn (FL)*
Rep. Ann Kuster (NH)*- Retiring	Rep. John Curtis (UT)- Running for other office
Rep. Robin Kelly (IL)*	Rep. Debbie Lesko (AZ)- Retiring
Rep. Nanette Barragan (CA)*	Rep. Greg Pence (IN)*- Retiring
Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (DE)*- Running for other office	Rep. Dan Crenshaw (TX)*
Rep. Angie Craig (MN)*	Rep. John Joyce (PA)*
Rep. Kim Schrier (WA)*	Rep. Kelly Armstrong (ND)- Running for other office
Rep. Lori Trahan (MA)*	Rep. Randy Weber (TX)
Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (TX)	Rep. Rick Allen (GA)
	Rep. Troy Balderson (OH)
	Rep. Russ Fulcher (ID)
	Rep. August Pfluger (TX)
	Rep. Diana Harshbarger (TN)*
	Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (IA)*
	Rep. Kat Cammack (FL)
	Rep. Jay Obernolte (CA)*