

Impact Health Policy Weekly

The House and Senate are both in session this week as the House attempts to move forward on passing their FY 2025 budget resolution and the Senate continues working on moving President Trump's nominees.

Nominations:

This week the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee will hold a markup to consider the nomination of Lori Chavez-DeRemer to be Secretary of Labor and will hold a hearing for the nominee to be Deputy Secretary of Labor, Keith Sonderling. The full Senate will vote on Daniel Driscoll's nomination to serve as secretary of the Army, followed by Jamieson Greer's nomination for U.S. trade representative.

Budget Reconciliation:

This week, the House is scheduled to bring their Budget Committee's resolution to the floor, possibly as soon as Tuesday, following Rules Committee action this afternoon. The sweeping House bill includes \$4.5 trillion in tax cut extensions, \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts, and lifts the statutory debt ceiling by \$4 trillion ([text/charts](#)). Among the key provisions in the budget, substantial cuts are mandated across several committees. Notably, the Energy and Commerce Committee is tasked with finding at least \$880 billion in savings, which could include cuts to Medicaid; the Agriculture Committee must reduce spending by at least \$230 billion; and the Education and Workforce Committee is expected to slash \$330 billion. At least one Republican has already stated she will vote no on the measure, while many other Republicans have outwardly expressed serious concerns, particularly with projected cuts to the Medicaid program. With only a single vote majority, passage far from certain.

Passing a budget resolution is just the first step in the reconciliation process. Both the House and Senate will need to adopt an identical budget resolution before committees can get to work on drafting the actual budget reconciliation text. The very slim margins in the House are further complicated by the Senate passing a \$342 billion "skinny" budget resolution last week that focuses on securing the border (\$175 billion), enhancing and revitalizing the nation's military capacity (\$150 billion), and facilitating energy independence by allowing offshore leases for oil drilling. Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) was the only Republican to join all 47 Democrats in voting against the measure.

This bill does not address an extension of President Trump's tax cuts but instead focuses on providing the President with policy wins before taking on the more politically contentious tax debate. Senate leaders have claimed their package is a "plan B" if the House fails to move a comprehensive package.

Hearings:

House Oversight and Government Reform: On Tuesday the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee will hold a [hearing](#) to examine the Government Accountability Office (GAO)'s 2025 High-Risk List to shine a light on federal programs that are especially susceptible to waste and abuse, as well as identify solutions to ensure the government is working efficiently and effectively.

House Energy and Commerce Committee: On Wednesday the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee will hold a [hearing](#) to examine consolidation in the pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) marketplace, focusing on legislative solutions to drive competition and lower costs for patients.

Regulatory Update

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is reviewing the following:

- **FY 2026 Medicare Payment Rules:** Proposed rules updating payments for [acute care hospitals and long-term care hospitals](#), as well as [hospice providers](#). The proposed rules are slated for April.
- **ACA Marketplace Program Integrity:** A [proposed rule](#) likely focused on addressing fraud in Marketplace plans, which has been a primary concern for [House Republicans](#) and conservative think tanks, such as the [Paragon Health Institute](#). The proposed rule will likely reverse a number of Biden-era policies related to enrollment and eligibility for premium subsidies, which were promulgated through the annual notice of benefit and payment parameters (NBPP). Peter Nelson, the new head of Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO), identified numerous Biden-era regulations in a [report](#) he wrote during his time at the Center of the American Experiment, a conservative think tank. Given the timing of the proposed rule, it seems that the Trump Administration intends for its policies to be finalized and effective before the start of the 2026 Open Enrollment Period on November 1, 2025.

This Week in Health Policy

Mon. (2/24)

- **1:00pm – R Street Discussion: Naloxone Retail Access** – The R Street Institute holds a discussion on overcoming challenges in the retail naloxone market. [Details.](#)
- **3:00pm – Hearing: VA EHRM Program** – The House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Technology Modernization holds an oversight hearing to examine the VA Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) program. [Details.](#)
- **4:00pm – Hearing: House Budget Resolution** – The House Rules Committee holds a meeting to examine the House budget resolution, [H. Con. Res. 14](#), which establishes the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2025 and sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2026 through 2034. [Details.](#)

Tue. (2/25)

- **7:30am – Axios Discussion: AI Leadership** – Axios holds a discussion with House Science, Space and Technology Chairman Brian Babin (R-TX) and Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) on how the U.S. is working to maintain science and technology leadership in an increasingly competitive global landscape and new era of artificial intelligence (AI). [Details.](#)

- **8:00am – A4H Discussion: Health Care Delivery Reform** – Accountable for Health (A4H) holds a conference in conjunction with Health Care Value Week to discuss accountable care successes, including Congressional, community, and provider perspectives on accountable care and the outlook for the future of health care delivery reform. [Details.](#)
- **9:30am – Hearing: DHS and OMB Nominations** – The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee holds a hearing to examine the nominations of Troy Edgar to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS), and James Bishop to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). [Details.](#)
- **10:00am – Hearing: OSTP and FTC Nominations** – The Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee holds a hearing to consider the nomination of Michael Kratsios to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and Mark Meador to be a Federal Trade Commissioner (FTC). [Details.](#)
- **1:00pm – Hearing: GAO 2025 High Risk List** – The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee holds a hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office (GAO)'s 2025 High-Risk List to shine a light on federal programs that are especially susceptible to waste and abuse, as well as identify solutions to ensure the government is working efficiently and effectively. [Details.](#)
- **2:00pm – Hearing: Birthright Citizenship** – The House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government holds a hearing to examine the meaning of the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and President Trump's recent Executive Order on birthright citizenship. [Details.](#)
- **2:00pm – Hearing: DOJ Oversight** – The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Oversight holds a hearing to examine “the Biden-Harris Administration's weaponization of the Department of Justice (DOJ) against American citizens and its political opponents. Additionally, the hearing will explore how the Trump-Vance Administration is working to restore the rule of law.” [Details.](#)
- **2:25pm – CRFB Discussion: Budget Resolution** – The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget (CRFB) holds a discussion on the budget reconciliation process. [Details.](#)

Wed. (2/26)

- **10:00am – Hearing: PBM Practices** – The House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee holds a hearing to examine consolidation in the pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) marketplace, focusing on legislative solutions to drive competition and lower costs for patients. [Details.](#)
- **10:15am – Hearing: Workforce and the Economy** – The House Education and the Workforce Committee holds a hearing titled “Unleashing America’s Workforce and Strengthening Our Economy”. [Details.](#)
- **12:00pm – RAND Discussion: AI in Clinical Care** – The RAND Corporation holds a discussion on AI risks and benefits in clinical care. [Details.](#)
- **3:00pm – Urban Institute Discussion: Disability Research** – The Urban Institute holds a discussion on how funders and researchers can benefit from supporting community advisory board partnerships to improve disability research. [Details.](#)

- **3:30pm – Hearing: Opioid Epidemic** – The Senate Special Committee on Aging holds a hearing to examine combating the opioid epidemic. [Details.](#)
- **4:30pm – Washington Post Discussion: AI Outlook** – The Washington Post Live holds a discussion with Rep. Jay Obernolte (R-CA) to discuss the evolution of AI and the impact on America’s economic competitiveness. [Details.](#)

Thurs. (2/27)

- **9:00am – Markup: Fentanyl Scheduling** – The Senate Judiciary holds a markup to consider [S.331](#), the HALT Fentanyl Act, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to the scheduling of fentanyl-related substances. [Details.](#)
- **9:30am – Markup: Labor Nomination** – The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee holds a markup to consider the nomination of Lori Chavez-DeRemer to be Secretary of Labor. [Details.](#)
- **12:00pm – CAHC Discussion: Health Care Reforms in 2025** – The Council for Affordable Health Coverage (CAHC) holds a discussion with top policymakers, thought leaders, and industry experts to assess ambitious health care reforms proposed by President Trump and Congress. Senate Majority Leader Thune (R-SD) and Reps. Jake Auchincloss (D-MA) and Aaron Bean (R-FL) will be participating. [Details.](#)
- **1:00pm – Urban Institute Discussion: Maternal Health Equity** – The Urban Institute holds a discussion with researchers, policymakers, advocates, and health care providers, to explore evidence, experience, and policy considerations to achieve maternal and infant health equity. [Details.](#)
- **4:00pm – JHU Discussion: Population Mental Health** – The Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Bloomberg Center holds a discussion on economic empowerment as a pillar of mental health in all policies agenda that can guide the Trump administration. The discussion will address how non-mental health policies can have effects on population mental health, and specifically how economic policies affect population mental health. [Details.](#)
- **Meeting: MACPAC** – The Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) holds a public meeting to discuss Medicaid and CHIP payment and policy issues. [Details.](#)

Fri. (2/28)

- **2:00pm – Brown University Discussion: Site-Neutral Payment Policies** – The Brown University Center for Advancing Health Policy Through Research holds a discussion on site-neutral payment policies and their implications for patients, providers, and the health care system. Panelists will provide insight into the challenges posed by current payment differentials, and the opportunities presented by site-neutral reforms. Daria Pelech, Principal analyst at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) will be participating. [Details.](#)
- **Meeting: MACPAC** – MACPAC holds a public meeting to discuss Medicaid and CHIP payment and policy issues. [Details.](#)

Featured Analysis

- **Impact Overview of President Trump’s Day One EO** – In Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **Impact Memo on Health-Related Staff Picks for the Second Trump Administration** – In Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **Policy Round-Up: CBO, GAO Reports on ACA Premium Tax Credits; DACA Marketplace Eligibility** – Available [here](#).
- **Impact Budget Reconciliation Primer** – In Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **Impact Medicaid Outlook: Threats and Opportunities** – In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).
- **Insights for Impact: the 340B Drug Pricing Program**– In the Policy Hub Insight Bank [here](#).

Regulatory Lookback

Fri. (2/21)

- **President Trump** issued two significant executive orders aimed at [restructuring the federal government](#) and [reducing regulatory oversight](#). [Details](#).

Thurs. (2/20)

- **HHS** rescinded prior guidance on gender-affirming care and [released](#) new directives emphasizing biological sex definitions. [Details](#).

Wed. (2/19)

- **President Trump** signed an [Executive Order](#) to expand access to in vitro fertilization. [Details](#).

Tues. (2/18)

- **Newly confirmed USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins** sent a [letter](#) to state, Tribal, territory, and local government partners to share her principles for USDA nutrition programs and encourage states to act as policy incubators. [Details](#).

Comment & Application Deadlines

- **February 25:** CMMI released an [RFA](#) for the Cell and Gene Therapy Access Model. [Details](#).
- **February 25:** CMMI released a [NOFO](#) to apply for Cooperative Agreement funding to support states’ participation in the Cell and Gene Therapy (CGT) Access Model. [Details](#).
- **March 7:** HHS OCR issued a [proposed rule](#) to update the HIPAA Security Rule to enhance cybersecurity protections. [Details](#).
- **March 10:** The FDA released [draft guidance](#) on accelerated approval and considerations for determining whether a confirmatory trial is underway. [Details](#).

- **March 15:** The DEA issued a [proposed rule](#) that would establish a new special registration for the prescription of a controlled substance via telemedicine. [Details.](#)
- **April 7:** The FDA issued [draft guidance](#) on considerations for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to support regulatory decision-making for drug and biological products. [Details.](#)
- **April 7:** The FDA released [draft guidance](#) on artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled device software functions (AI-DSFs): lifecycle management and marketing submission recommendations. [Details.](#)
- **July 1:** The CDC [seeking nominations](#) for membership on the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee (CLIAC). [Details.](#)