



Senate Passes Changes to Paycheck Protection Program

On Friday, the President signed the *Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act* (H.R. 7010) after the Senate passed it by unanimous consent. The small-business loan legislation, which had previously been passed by the House of Representatives, would increase flexibility in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), giving companies much more time to spend the money – within 24 weeks or until the end of the year, whichever comes first – and still qualify to have their PPP loans forgiven. Certain loans to businesses would also have up to five years, instead of two years, to repay any money owed on any remaining loan amount and could use a greater percentage of proceeds on rent and other approved non-payroll expenses (to 40% instead of the current 25%) and still receive full loan forgiveness. Despite these changes, the program is still slated to end on June 30.

Sens. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Ben Cardin (D-Md.) sent a [letter](#) to Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Jovita Carranza asking them to disclose additional details on the loans issued under the PPP, including the names of borrowers. The lawmakers also request information on the number of approved loans, the volume of approved loans, and the number of lenders. They ask that the agencies have a plan in place by June 10 outlining the process by which SBA will provide lawmakers and the public with ongoing updates.

Next COVID Package Pushed to July

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has stated that the next Stimulus legislation will not be considered before the July 3 two-week recess. While the dollar amount of the bill remains uncertain, McConnell has reportedly told the President that he does not want it to exceed \$1 trillion. President Trump, however, has expressed support for the inclusion of an infrastructure package that could push the legislation beyond that amount.

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Lawmakers Raise Concerns About HHS Relief for Medicaid Providers

A bipartisan group of lawmakers have sent a [letter](#) to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar asserting that emergency funding to health care providers that serve large populations of Medicaid patients is not being sent fast enough. Rural hospitals and doctors that rely primarily on Medicaid funds have argued that HHS has failed to target funding from the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund to those who care for a large number of Medicaid beneficiaries in a timely manner. The letter states that HHS should “marshal its resourcefulness, and its relationship with states, to develop a methodology to fairly and robustly allocate funds for Medicaid providers.” The letter was signed by Senate Finance Committee Chair Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) and Ranking Member Greg Walden (R-Ore.).

House Appropriators to Meet in July

House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) has announced plans to hold all subcommittee and full committee markups the weeks of July 6 and 13, with the potential for spending bills to be considered on the floor the weeks of July 20 and 27. Rep. Lowey stated that she is working with the Office of the Attending Physician and House leadership to find a room that can accommodate all panel members at a safe distance from each other. The specific order of spending bill consideration will be announced later this month.

Grassley Continues Push for Drug Pricing Bill

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) is continuing to push for passage of his panel’s bipartisan drug pricing legislation. In an interview last week, Grassley discussed the need for the bill to ensure access to products created in response to COVID-19 and to prepare for future pandemics. According to Grassley, President Trump is also still interested in pursuing the issue of high drug prices. While House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has told Grassley that she would engage with the Finance Committee on drug pricing, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has raised concerns about the legislation and has yet to signal whether he will bring it to the floor for a vote.

Senate Confirms Pandemic Watchdog

The Senate confirmed Brian Miller, by a vote of 51-49, as special inspector general for pandemic recovery last week. This position is charged with overseeing the trillions of dollars in federal aid being dispersed to support economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. Miller has served as a White House lawyer and was a part of President Trump’s impeachment defense.

Giroir to Step Down as Testing Czar

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Assistant Secretary Brett Giroir announced that he will be stepping down as the Trump administration’s COVID-19 testing czar at FEMA in mid-June. An HHS spokesperson indicated that there are no plans for a new testing point person to be appointed. Giroir will return to his regular position at HHS.

Lawmakers Request More Community Health Center Funding

A bipartisan group of senators has [written](#) to appropriations leadership requesting additional assistance for community health centers in the next coronavirus relief package. The lawmakers state that community health centers are critical to the COVID-19 response, serving more than 29 million patients nationwide. They argue that more funding is necessary to support these providers that are facing lost revenue as the pandemic continues. The letter was led by Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) and Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and signed by 41 senators.

Hart Health Strategies COVID-19 Resources

Hart Health Strategies Inc. continues to update the following resources related to the coronavirus pandemic. Please remember to clear your cache to ensure you download the most recent documents.

- [COVID-19 Testing](#)
- [Disaster Primer](#)
- [Federal Relief Overview](#)
- [Health Care Workers on the Front Lines](#)
- [Hospice and Palliative Care](#)
- [Nursing Resources](#)
- [Personal Protective Equipment](#)
- [Physician Provisions](#)
- [Re-Opening America](#)
- [Small Business Resources](#)
- [Small Business - Paycheck Protection Program](#)
- [Small Business – PPP FAQ](#)
- [State Resources](#)
- [Tax Provisions](#)
- [Telehealth Overview](#)
- [Timeline for Implementation](#)

Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing “Evaluating the Federal Government’s Procurement and Distribution Strategies in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic;” 10:00 a.m., video conference; June 9

Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearing to examine building a more resilient VA supply chain; 3:00 p.m., 430 Dirksen Bldg.; June 9

Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee hearing “Implementation of Title I (Keeping American Workers Paid and Employed) of the CARES Act;” 10:00 a.m., 301 Russell Bldg.; June 10

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee hearing “COVID-19: Going Back to School Safely;” 10:00 a.m., 430 Dirksen Bldg.; June 10

House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing “No Worker Left Behind: Supporting Essential Workers;” 12:00 p.m., 2154 Rayburn Bldg.; June 10

House Small Business Committee virtual hearing “The Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program: A View from Main Street;” 1:00 p.m., via Cisco Webex; June 10

Senate Special Aging Committee hearing to examine combatting social isolation and loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic; 9:30 a.m., 253 Russell Bldg.; June 11

House Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearing “Assessing VA’s Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: 90 Days Later;” 2:00 p.m.; June 11

Senate HELP Committee hearing to examine telehealth, focusing on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic; 10:00 a.m., 430 Dirksen Bldg.; June 17

Recently Introduced Health Legislation

H.Res.989 — Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that blood donation policies in the United States should be equitable and based on science; Sponsor: Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [D-CA-28]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7071 — To provide for the acceleration of access to clinical therapies for the treatment of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Rep. Fortenberry, Jeff [R-NE-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7077 — To establish or expand programs to improve health equity regarding COVID-19 and reduce or eliminate inequities in the prevalence and health outcomes of COVID-19; Sponsor: Rep. Kelly, Robin L. [D-IL-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7078 — To study the effects of changes to telehealth under the Medicare and Medicaid programs during the COVID-19 emergency; Sponsor: Rep. Kelly, Robin L. [D-IL-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means

H.R.7080 — To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to States, political subdivisions of States, Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, community-based entities, and primary care and behavioral health organizations to address behavioral health needs caused by the public health emergency declared with respect to COVID-19; Sponsor: Rep. Porter, Katie [D-CA-45]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

S.3847 — A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish an Emergency Office of Manufacturing for Public Health, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3848 — A bill to create a Coronavirus Containment Corps; Sponsor: Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3850 — A bill to require the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to collect and report certain data concerning COVID-19; Sponsor: Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3853 — A bill to prevent price gouging during emergencies, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Commerce, Science, and Transportation

S.3858 — A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to become the sole owner and distributor of certain medical equipment in the event of a covered emergency; to establish a Joint Congressional Committee on Defense Production; and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

S.3859 — A bill to extend the covered period for the paycheck protection program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Loeffler, Kelly [R-GA]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.3861 — A bill to establish privacy requirements for operators of infectious disease exposure notification services; Sponsor: Sen. Cantwell, Maria [D-WA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3864 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate the 190-day lifetime limit on inpatient psychiatric hospital services under the Medicare Program; Sponsor: Sen. Collins, Susan M. [R-ME]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.3865 — A bill to provide for the treatment of certain criminal violations under the paycheck protection program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Portman, Rob [R-OH]; Committees: Senate - Small Business and Entrepreneurship

S.3868 — A bill to require the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to evaluate members of the Armed Forces and veterans who have tested positive for a virus certified as a pandemic for potential exposure to open burn pits and toxic airborne chemicals or other airborne contaminants, to conduct a study on the impact of such a pandemic on members and veterans with such exposure, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

S.3872 — A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to establish a time-limited provisional approval pathway, subject to specific obligations, for certain drugs and biological products, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Braun, Mike [R-IN]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3877 — A bill to establish or expand programs to improve health equity regarding COVID-19 and reduce or eliminate inequities in the prevalence and health outcomes of COVID-19; Sponsor: Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.3881 — A bill to increase support for State Children's Health Insurance programs during the COVID-19 emergency, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA]; Committees: Senate - Finance

S.3888 — A bill to ensure that veterans receive timely and effective health care under the Veterans Community Care Program and Veterans Care Agreements during the COVID-19 emergency, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs

H.Res.991 — Expressing support for designation of March 1 as "National Healthcare Professional Appreciation Day" in commemoration of the day the first American healthcare professional became infected with COVID-19 while caring for a patient; Sponsor: Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7094 — To amend title VI of the Social Security Act to expand the permissible use of funds under the Coronavirus Relief Fund; Sponsor: Rep. Davidson, Warren [R-OH-8]; Committees: House - Oversight and Reform

H.R.7104 — To direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements to expand and enhance manufacturing capacity of vaccines and vaccine candidates to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19; Sponsor: Rep. Kuster, Ann M. [D-NH-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7105 — To provide flexibility for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in caring for homeless veterans during a covered public health emergency, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Rep. Levin, Mike [D-CA-49]; Committees: House - Veterans' Affairs; Budget

H.R.7113 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish an Emergency Office of Manufacturing for Public Health, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Rep. Schakowsky, Janice D. [D-IL-9]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7117 — To require employers to pay essential pay to health care employees during public health emergencies, and to provide a tax credit for the cost of such pay; Sponsor: Rep. Watson Coleman, Bonnie [D-NJ-12]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Education and Labor

S.3898 — A bill to provide flexibility for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in caring for homeless veterans during a covered public health emergency, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Sen. Sullivan, Dan [R-AK]; Committees: Senate - Veterans' Affairs