

McDermottPlus Healthcare Preview

WEEK OF DECEMBER 16, 2019



A Busy Week to End 2019. Sort of.

- + **CONGRESS HAS ONE WEEK TO FUND THE GOVERNMENT AND ADDRESS MAJOR HEALTH CARE PRIORITIES.** Congress needs to fund the government and address the health care extenders (and the health tax extenders if they so choose) by Friday of this week. With only five days left to accomplish these priorities, there are still a lot of unknowns regarding what congressional leadership and the healthcare committees will agree to. However, at this point on Monday at 10:00 am, signs are trending towards a short-term deal on health care extenders.

A short-term extender package would look like a three or four month extension of the extender programs. A deal like this would still leave drug pricing and surprise billing on the table as potentially possible early next year, as Congress will again look for a long-term extension of the health care extenders and will need a pathway to pay for it. The Committees have already provided details on what a long-term extender package would look like. While the assembly we thought might happen this week appears not to have occurred, a short-term deal leaves every issue (drug pricing, surprise billing, and health care extenders) in play for the early part of 2020.

- + **WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN FOR 2020?** The pathway Congress chooses determines healthcare priorities in 2020. If the first few months of the year still focus on extenders, it leaves open the possibility of drug pricing or surprise billing reforms. Of course, that means we immediately have a new deadline to address the extenders. The big question will be, do surprise billing and prescription drug policies have enough political support to move in 2020? Lots of questions will remain. But by Friday of this week, we will likely have answers to how 2019 wraps up and what the healthcare priorities are for 2020. They may look a lot like the issues of 2019.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

Senate Judiciary Committee

[Tackling the Opioid Crisis: A Whole-of-Government Approach](#)

Tuesday, December 17th at 10am

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

There are no health care related hearings in the House this week.

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