

McDermottPlus Healthcare Preview

WEEK OF JANUARY 21, 2020



Health Care Priorities in Congress are on Pause.

- + **IMPEACHMENT AND THE SENATE.** Last week the House sent two articles of impeachment to the Senate. Following that, the Senate began its procedural functions to begin the impeachment trial. The Senate will hear arguments starting Tuesday. While the impeachment trial in the Senate is underway, movement in other spaces, including health care, will come to a pause. Unlike in the House, where only the key committees of jurisdiction were involved with impeachment, in the Senate, all 100 members are engaged in the process. All 100 members act as the jury during the trial, so Members are less likely to be engaged in policymaking activities during the trial. They are not supposed to have any materials at their desks other than those related to the trial while it is in session. No multitasking! The Senate does have morning sessions to conduct regular business, as the impeachment trial does not start until the afternoon. Generally, though, that provides a limited timeframe to advance real policy and it is not expected that the Senate will want to be seen focusing on anything other than impeachment during the trial. We do expect that staff will be using this time to work on policy issues. Staff will be gearing up to have policies and issues ironed out when the Senate can shift its focus back to the pressing health care issues of 2020. With the May 22, 2020 health care extender timeline rapidly approaching and the Senate being preoccupied until potentially mid-February with the impeachment, the window to address health care issues will be limited. This lull may be followed by something that feels more like a sprint.
- + **HOUSE ON RECESS.** The House is on recess this week after sending the articles of impeachment to the Senate. So again, health care and other priorities remain on pause until they come back to Washington, DC next week. However, when the House does come back, they can pick-up with their legislative priorities while the Senate is focused on impeachment. As a result, the House may be further along in developing and finalizing policies that stakeholders are most interested in, such as the extenders, surprise billing, and prescription drug pricing reforms.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

No health care related health care hearings in the Senate this week.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

The House is on recess.

MACPAC JANUARY MEETING

[Thursday and Friday, January 23rd and 24th](#)

CONTACT INFO

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