

McDermottPlus Healthcare Preview

WEEK OF MARCH 16, 2020

ADDRESSING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC.

- + **THE SENATE IS IN SESSION TO ADDRESS COVID-19.** Last week, the House passed a second supplemental funding package in response to COVID-19. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act ([H.R. 6201](#)) requires employers with fewer than 500 employees to provide sick and quarantined workers with two weeks of emergency paid leave, including tax incentives for these employers to help offset the newly required paid sick leave, and provides \$1 billion in grant funding to help states manage and expand their unemployment insurance programs. It also appropriates \$1.2 billion to the departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services to provide additional nutrition assistance to affected areas and populations, and requires private health plans to cover diagnostic testing for COVID-19 at no cost to consumers. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) cancelled the Senate's scheduled one-week recess this week in order to pass this second supplemental package. We do not expect the Senate to make substantive changes to the House bill, but technical corrections are certainly possible. The Senate is expected to pass the bill early this week and the President is expected to sign it.
- + **IS A THIRD SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING PACKAGE COMING SOON?** With the significant economic impact that COVID-19 is having across the country and the globe, there is a growing interest on Capitol Hill in passing a large stimulus package to support individuals and businesses who are financially impacted by the pandemic. President Trump has made clear that he supports an economic stimulus package aimed at shoring up hotel and airline companies hurt by consumers' travel concerns, as well as payroll tax cuts and further support for small businesses. Shoring up the healthcare system is likely to emerge as an even higher priority. Expect a much larger stimulus package to come together in the coming weeks. Healthcare stakeholders in need of federal regulatory relief, supply chain intervention or financial support should be thinking about and communicating needs to federal and state authorities.

THIS WEEK IN THE SENATE

No healthcare related hearings in the Senate this week.

THIS WEEK IN THE HOUSE

The House is on a one-week recess.

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