



Health Policy Briefing

April 15, 2024

Oklahoma Republican Tom Cole Selected to Chair Appropriations Committee

The Republican Steering Committee selected Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.) to serve as the chair of the House Appropriations Committee. Cole succeeds retiring Rep. Kay Granger (R-Texas.). As chairman, Cole will lead the committee with Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.). The two spent years alongside each other at the head of the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, where they worked together to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and biomedical research. Cole has spoken about his personal experience with close family members having Alzheimer’s disease and multiple sclerosis. He has also been a champion of the Indian Health Service and efforts to address the fentanyl and opioid crisis during his time in Congress. The Steering Committee’s recommendation was ratified by the full Republican conference on Wednesday.

E&C Announces Subcommittee Assignment Changes

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.) announced several changes to the panel’s subcommittee assignments last week. Of note, Rep. Troy Balderson (R-Ohio) will leave the Communications and Technology Subcommittee to join the Health Subcommittee. A full list of the membership changes can be found [here](#).

GAO Releases Report on Community Health Center Revenue

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a new [report](#) updating data on community health center revenue for the first time since 2017. The report found that community health center total revenue has grown significantly in recent years, increasing from approximately \$12 billion in 2010, to \$26 billion in 2017, to \$42.9 billion in 2022. The GAO analysis was requested by Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Ranking Member Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.). The lawmakers stated that the updated information will help inform future conversations on the reauthorization of community health center funding, which is set to expire at the end of this year.

Inside

- [Sanders Proposes Long-COVID Moonshot.....](#)2
- [Grassley Calls on HHS to Strengthen Cybersecurity Efforts.....](#)2
- [Becerra Considering CA Gubernatorial Bid.....](#)2
- [Congressional Retirements and Resignations.....](#)3
- [Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups.....](#)4
- [Recently Introduced Health Legislation.....](#)5

Sanders Proposes Long-COVID Moonshot

Senate HELP Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) has proposed a moonshot approach to long-COVID research. Sanders released a draft legislative proposal in a [letter](#) to long-COVID stakeholders last week which would provide \$10 billion in mandatory funding over the next decade for the NIH “to respond to the long COVID crisis with the sense of urgency that it demands.” The proposal would also:

- Create a centralized coordinating entity for long COVID research activities at NIH;
- Require NIH to establish a new grant process for clinical trials related to long COVID;
- Establish an NIH research advisory board comprised of individuals who have lived experience with long COVID;
- Require NIH to establish a long COVID database for the storage and dissemination of de-identified patient data; and
- Provide continued education and support to patients, providers, and the public about the ongoing risks of long COVID.

Sanders requests feedback on his proposal by April 23.

Grassley Calls on HHS to Strengthen Cybersecurity Efforts

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) has sent a [letter](#) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and six other federal agencies regarding their implementation of the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO) [recommendations](#) on cybersecurity risk management strategies. Grassley accuses the agencies of “dragging their feet” on improving the cybersecurity of U.S. critical infrastructure, and asks what steps HHS has taken to close GAO’s recommendations. GAO recommended that HHS determine the extent to which the health care and public health sector is adopting leading cybersecurity practices to reduce ransomware attacks, and that HHS develop and implement routine evaluation procedures to measure the effectiveness of federal support in assisting the health care and public health sector reduce the risk of ransomware.

Becerra Considering CA Gubernatorial Bid

Politico reported last week HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra may leave the Biden administration after the November elections to run for governor of California in 2026. While Becerra has sidestepped the question when asked directly, he has reportedly had conversations in recent weeks about leaving Washington to succeed Gov. Gavin Newsom in two years. Becerra has set aside nearly \$1.55 million in leftover campaign contributions from when he was California attorney general in an account to run for California Superintendent of Public Instruction in 2030, which would be usable in the 2026 governor’s race.

Congressional Retirements and Resignations

A running list of members of Congress who are retiring or seeking other office can be found below.

SENATE	
Stabenow (D), MI	Braun (R), IN
Cardin (D), MD	Romney (R), UT
Carper (D), DE	
Butler (D), CA	
Manchin (D), WV	
Sinema (I), AZ	
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
Porter (D), CA	Mooney (R), WV
Lee (D), CA	Banks (R), IN
Gallego (D), AZ	Bishop (R), NC
Schiff (D), CA	Lesko (R), AZ
Slotkin (D), MI	Granger (R), TX
Allred (D), TX	Buck (R), CO (effective March 22, 2024)
Trone (D), MD	Burgess, MD (R), TX
Blunt Rochester (D), DE	Wenstrup, DPM (R), OH
Napolitano (D), CA	McHenry (R), NC
Wexton (D), VA	McCarthy (R), CA (effective Dec. 31, 2023)
Kim, Andy (D), NJ	Johnson (R), OH (effective Jan. 21, 2024)
Jackson, Jeff (D), NC	Ferguson, IV, DMD, PC (R), GA
Sarbanes (D), MD	Curtis (R), UT
Blumenauer (D), OR	Luetkemeyer (R), MO
Kilmer (D), WA	Lamborn (R), CO
Spanberger (D), VA	Bucshon, MD (R), IN
Kildee (D), MI	Pence (R), IN
Phillips (D), MN	Duncan (R), SC
Cardenas (D), CA	Armstrong (R), ND
Eshoo (D), CA	McMorris Rodgers (R), WA
Manning (D), NC	Gallagher (R), WI (effective April 19, 2024)
Higgins (D), NY (effective Feb. 2, 2024)	
Nickel (D), NC	
Ruppersberger (D), MD	
Sablan (D), MP	
Kuster (D), NH	

Upcoming Congressional Hearings and Markups

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies hearing “A Review of the President’s Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for the Department of Health and Human Services;” 10:00 a.m.; April 16

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on health hearing “Examining Health Sector Cybersecurity in the Wake of the Change Healthcare Attack;” 10:00 a.m.; April 16

House Education & the Workforce Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions hearing “ERISA’s 50th Anniversary: The Path to Higher Quality, Lower Cost Health Care;” 10:15 a.m.; April 16

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing “Examining How Improper Payments Cost Taxpayers Billions and Weaken Medicare and Medicaid;” 10:30 a.m.; April 16

House Oversight and Accountability Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic hearing “Academic Malpractice: Examining the Relationship Between Scientific Journals, the Government, and Peer Review;” 2:00 p.m.; April 16

House Veterans’ Affairs Subcommittee on Health markup on pending legislation; 3:00 p.m.; April 16

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Innovation Data, and Commerce hearing “Legislative Solutions to Protect Kids Online and Ensure Americans’ Data Privacy Rights;” 10:00 a.m.; April 17

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health hearing “Fiscal Year 2025 Department of Health and Human Services Budget;” 2:00 p.m.; April 17

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies hearing “Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for the Food and Drug Administration;” 9:00 a.m.; April 18

House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing with EcoHealth Alliance President Dr. Peter Daszak; time TBD; May 1

H.R.7868 — To require the Director of the Office of Personnel Management to take certain actions with respect to the health insurance program carried out under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Waltz, Michael [Rep.-R-FL-6]; Committees: House - Oversight and Accountability

H.R.7876 — To support programs for mosquito-borne and other vector-borne disease surveillance and control; Sponsor: Neguse, Joe [Rep.-D-CO-2]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

S. 4078 – To amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation to test a model to improve access to specialty health services for certain Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries; Sponsor: Mullin, Markwayne [Sen.-R-OK]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S. 4079 – To improve obstetric emergency care; Sponsor: Hassan, Margaret Wood [Sen.-D-NH]; Committees: Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

S. 4083 – To amend the Fairness to Contact Lens Consumers Act to modernize the verification of contact lens prescriptions, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Duckworth, Tammy [Sen.-D-IL]; Committees: Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

S. 4087 – To amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to prohibit skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities from using pre-dispute arbitration agreements with respect to residents of those facilities under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Blumenthal, Richard [Sen.-D-CT]; Committees: Senate Finance

S. 4088 – To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants for career support for a skilled, internationally educated health care workforce; Sponsor: Kaine, Tim [Sen.-D-VA]; Committees: Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S. 4089 – To enhance fraud prevention, improve recovery of improper payments, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Peters, Gary [Sen.-D-MI]; Committees: Senate Judiciary.

H.Res. 1124 – A resolution expressing support for the designation of the last Tuesday of April each year as “APOL1-Mediated Kidney Disease (AMKD) Awareness Day;” Sponsor: Plaskett, Stacey [Rep.-D-VI-At Large]; Committees: House Energy and Commerce

H.R. 7899 – To direct the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to promulgate the final regulations relating to special registration for telemedicine; Sponsor: Ezell, Mike [Rep.-R-MS-04]; Committees: House Energy and Commerce, Judiciary.

H.R. 7907 – To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants for career support for a skilled, internationally educated health care workforce; Sponsor: Krishnamoorthi, Raja [Rep.-D-IL-08]; Committees: House Energy and Commerce

S.Res.632 — A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Public Health Week; Sponsor: Lujan, Ben Ray [Sen.-D-NM]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.Res.635 — A resolution designating the first week of April 2024 as “National Asbestos Awareness Week”; Sponsor: Tester, Jon [Sen.-D-MT]; Submitted in the Senate, considered, and agreed to without amendment and with a preamble by Unanimous Consent.

S.Res.636 — A resolution designating February 29, 2024, as “Rare Disease Day”; Sponsor: Brown, Sherrod [Sen.-D-OH]; Submitted in the Senate, considered, and agreed to without amendment and with a preamble by Unanimous Consent.

S.4094 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of the Medicare Diabetes Prevention program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Scott, Tim [Sen.-R-SC]; Committees: Senate – Finance

S.4101 — A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the continued designation of hospitals that met mountainous terrain or secondary roads distance requirement as critical access hospitals and to modify distance requirements for ambulance services furnished by critical access hospitals; Sponsor: Manchin, Joe, III [Sen.-D-WV]; Committees: Senate – Finance

H.R.7924 — To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to support graduate programs in mental and behavioral health professions at minority-serving institutions, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Bowman, Jamaal [Rep.-D-NY-16]; Committees: House - Education and the Workforce

H.R.7931 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to update the fee schedule for ambulance services provided by critical access hospitals; Sponsor: Miller, Carol D. [Rep.-R-WV-1]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

S.Res.639 — A resolution expressing support for the designation of the month of April 2024 as “Parkinson’s Awareness Month”; Sponsor: Stabenow, Debbie [Sen.-D-MI]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4108 — A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide a process to lock and suspend domain names used to facilitate the online sale of drugs illegally, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Rubio, Marco [Sen.-R-FL]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

S.4109 — A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to clarify roles and responsibilities within the Department of Defense relating to subconcussive and concussive brain injuries and to improve brain health initiatives of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Warren, Elizabeth [Sen.-D-MA]; Committees: Senate - Armed Services

S.4111 — A bill to provide for a study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on the prevalence and mortality of cancer among individuals who served as active duty aircrew in the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Kelly, Mark [Sen.-D-AZ]; Committees: Senate - Veterans’ Affairs

S.4112 — A bill to provide protections from prosecution for drug possession to individuals who seek medical assistance when witnessing or experiencing an overdose, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Booker, Cory A. [Sen.-D-NJ]; Committees: Senate – Judiciary

S.4115 — A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prohibit graduate medical schools from receiving Federal financial assistance if such schools adopt certain policies and requirements relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion; Sponsor: Kennedy, John [Sen.-R-LA]; Committees: Senate - Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

H.Res.1136 — Expressing support for designation of the month of April 2024 as “Parkinson’s Awareness Month”; Sponsor: Wexton, Jennifer [Rep.-D-VA-10]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7939 — To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve Medicare beneficiary access to new medical technologies that improve health care quality and outcomes by ensuring that breakthrough devices are eligible for conditional approval under the Medicare New Technology Add-On Payment (NTAP) Program, enabling these medical breakthroughs to be provided to Medicare beneficiaries without unnecessary delay; Sponsor: Carey, Mike [Rep.-R-OH-15]; Committees: House - Ways and Means; Energy and Commerce

H.R.7958 — To amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the Director of the National Institutes of Health from conducting or funding research that causes significant pain or distress to a dog or cat, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Mace, Nancy [Rep.-R-SC-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7964 — To prohibit the use of Federal funds to establish, implement, or enforce any COVID-19 mask mandate; Sponsor: Ogles, Andrew [Rep.-R-TN-5]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.7970 — To require direct-to-consumer advertisements for prescription drugs and biological products to include truthful and not misleading pricing information; Sponsor: Williams, Nikema [Rep.-D-GA-5]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means