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COVID-19 Legislative Update

July 13, 2020

Please see below for updates on legislation related to COVID-19. Updates are sent every Monday evening. For past updates, click [here](#). For updates before May 8, click [here](#). If you believe you have been accidentally unsubscribed, you can re-subscribe [here](#).

7.13.2020. COVID-19 Legislative Update

Legislation

Supplemental IV

Timeline: In a press conference today, Leader McConnell announced that **a draft on the Republican bill will be released next week**, once members return from recess. Last Friday, Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee staff (majority only) submitted text to be reviewed by the full committee. Despite the drafting deadline, staff had still not received clear guidance from Leader McConnell's office on the scope or priorities of the broader bill. The Committee can move forward without a budget submission from the administration.

Process/Politics: While Leader McConnell has said he has discussed the draft bill with Treasury Secretary Mnuchin, it's unclear who will represent Republicans in the room when negotiations begin. In the past we've seen Secretary Mnuchin directly negotiate with Speaker Pelosi, though in COVID 3.5, we saw Leader McConnell act as the point person for the GOP. Involving Treasury Secretary Mnuchin or the President may be the best opportunity for a robust bill, though some Republicans see Leader McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy as the strongest negotiators to ensure conservative priorities are included.

Some have raised the issue that while Leader McConnell has been persuaded that another bill is necessary, **there may not be enough Republican votes** in the Senate to pass another supplemental.

won't pass the Senate. He also indicated that the draft bill will focus on children, jobs, and health care, though what policies that entails is unclear. In addition to liability protection, in past days, Republicans have indicated that a draft bill might include provisions relating to schools, testing, limited state/local/tribal funding, and alterations to the federal boost to Unemployment Insurance (UI). If Democrats concede liability protections, they will likely push for higher amounts and more flexibility for funding to state, local, and tribal governments; extended and expanded UI; and other health priorities like expansion of Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP). Health priorities could also include policies related to COVID-19 vaccine development and distribution – today, Senate Democrats released [white paper](#) calling for **\$25 billion in emergency funding for vaccine efforts**.

A lot of work in the Senate has been done to try to find a **fix to unemployment insurance incentives**. One of the solutions floated would be to create a cap, so individuals couldn't earn more on unemployment payments than they were earning in their previous job. Another idea would be to have the federal boost to unemployment insurance equal the difference between the UI level in that state and what someone was making in their previous job. Both ideas aim at removing the current economic disincentive for those on unemployment to return to their job or seek employment. **Another sticking point negotiators will have to work through is how long federal UI should be extended for.** Current law has UI expiring on July 31. In the Heroes Act, Democrats extended UI provisions (depending on the program) through January and March of 2021. [Legislation](#) introduced by Leader Schumer and Sen. Wyden include that timeline as well. Republicans, however, will likely insist on a shorter extension, either to the end of the fiscal year (September 30) or around the election (November 3).

While the Heroes Act will not be taken up by the Senate (as Sen. McConnell has indicated), it can serve as a marker of what the Senate will be responding to. Heroes Act text (as of 5/12/2020) [here](#). Section by section [here](#). One pager [here](#). State and Local one pager [here](#). NCAI's summary on tribal provisions [here](#). Manager's amendment [here](#). House Rules Committee report [here](#).

Passed Legislation

Moving forward, this section will only include new information and guidance. For past information and guidance and passed legislation, please refer to the [archives](#).

New Implementation Information and Guidance

- 7/10 – Last Friday, HHS announced the **release of another \$4 billion in Provider Relief Fund payments**. The funding comes out of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and is broken down with \$3 billion going to highly impacted hospitals described as having thin margins and serving vulnerable populations. This will be determined with a new profitability threshold of less than of 3 percent averaged consecutively over two or more of the last five cost reporting periods, and they expect it to reach about 215 facilities.

Overall, HHS says that 500 of rural hospitals will receive payments ranging from \$100,000 to \$4,500,000 for rural designated providers and \$100,000 to \$2,000,000 for the other providers.

- Press release [here](#).
- 7/8 – SBA and Treasury released an updated FAQ on the Coronavirus Relief Fund (for state, local, and tribal governments). FAQ [here](#).

Members of Congress in Quarantine or Treatment (new additions in bold)

Tested Positive (0):

Currently Self-Quarantined (0):

Recovered (7): Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), Rep. Joe Cunningham (D-SC), Rep. Ben McAdams (D-UT), Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA), Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), Rep. Neal Dunn (R-FL)

Completed Quarantine (40): Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC), Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-SC), Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), Rep. Sharice Davids (D-KS), Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA), Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ), Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO), Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO), Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), Rep. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM), Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI), Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-FL), Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY), Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), Rep. Vincente Gonzalez (D-TX), Rep. Drew Ferguson (R-GA), Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ), Rep. Anthony Brindisi (D-NY), Rep. David Price (D-NC), Rep. Ann Wagner (R-MO), Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-NY), Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-PA), Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL), Rep. Andy Kim (D-NJ), Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK), Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT), Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT), Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA), Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA), Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX), Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ), Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Rep. Tom Rice (R-SC)



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