



**ACEP 911 Network Weekly Update:
February 17, 2017**

Next week both the House and Senate will be out of session for President's Day recess.

- **Senate Finance Committee Holds Confirmation Hearing for CMS Administrator**
- **Shulkin Confirmed as Next Secretary of Veterans Administration**
- **Prudent Layperson Standard Discussed on Senate Floor**
- **Legislation Introduced to Combat Synthetic Drug Trafficking**
- **Cosponsors Added to EMTALA Liability Bill**
- **Congressional Hearings**
- **2017 Leadership and Advocacy Conference - Highlighted Speakers, Sessions, and Congressional Dine-Arounds/Socials**

CMS Nominee Seema Verma Hearing

Thursday morning the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on the nomination of Seema Verma to be the administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). During the hearing, Ms. Verma expressed her support for individuals choosing their own health plan options and that should preclude federal mandates as to which services every plan must include. To view the hearing, [click here](#).

Senate Confirms VA Secretary

In a rare display of bipartisanship, the Senate confirmed Dr. David Shulkin to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs on Monday night. After only ten minutes of debate the Senate unanimously voted in favor of Dr. Shulkin with a vote of 100-0.

Sen. Cardin Talks About PLS on Senate Floor

Last Thursday, during a speech about the Affordable Care Act and its provisions, Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD) highlighted his work to establish the Prudent Layperson Standard (PLS) as federal policy and how its inclusion in the ACA has helped the lives of many of his constituents. To read Sen. Cardin's comments in the Congressional Record, [click here](#).

Bill Introduced to Help Prevent Illicit Drugs from Entering Country

On Wednesday, Reps. Pat Tiberi (R-OH) and Richard Neal (D-MA) introduced the "Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention (STOP) Act." This bill is designed to help keep illicit synthetic forms of fentanyl and carfentanil from being shipped directly to U.S. drug traffickers in the U.S. from countries where these substances are manufactured, such as China and India. Disreputable manufacturers take advantage of weaknesses in international mail security standards to break U.S. customs laws and regulations by shipping drugs directly through the U.S. Postal System. Unlike UPS or FedEx, the USPS does not require advance electronic customs data for the vast majority of mail entering the U.S. and the sheer volume of mail prevents Customs and Border Protection from being able to manually scan these packages.

A Senate companion bill is expected to be introduced soon by Sens. Rob Portman (R-OH), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).

Additional Cosponsors Added to EMTALA Liability Bill

The "Health Care Safety Net Enhancement Act" (H.R. 548) recently re-introduced by Rep. Charlie Dent (R-PA) is gaining support in the House. The ACEP-supported bill addresses the growing crisis in access to emergency care by providing emergency and on-call physicians who perform EMTALA-related services with temporary protections under the Federal Tort Claims Act. The most recent additions include: Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL), Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Rep. Robert Pittenger (R-NC) and Rep. JackieWalorski (R-IN.)

Senate Hearing on Mental Health Funding

On Wednesday, the Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee held a hearing on "Mental Health Care: Examining Treatments and Services." A list of witnesses can be found [here](#).

House Hearing on Health Insurance Reform

On Thursday, the House Judiciary Regulatory Reform Subcommittee held a hearing on H.R. 372, the "Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act," sponsored by Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ). The bill would remove the health insurance industry exemption under the McCarran-Ferguson Act. To view the hearing, click [here](#).

**Register for the 2017 Leadership and Advocacy Conference
March 12-15, 2017 in Washington, D.C.**

With a new Administration, Congress, and legislative agenda, the need for emergency physicians' involvement in the legislative and political process is greater than ever before. Highlights include confirmed speaker ZDoggMD and invited speakers: Sen Tim Kaine (D-VA); newly confirmed HHS Secretary, Rep. Tom Price (R-GA); and nominee for CMS Administrator, Seema Verma. ACEP Board Member Dr. Mark Rosenberg will host a session on "Creating Solutions to the Opioid Epidemic" and Ed Gaines, Dr. Alison Haddock, and Dr. Nathan Schlicher will host a session on "Out-of-Network/Balance Billing – Where are We?"

On Tuesday, March 14, attendees will head to Capitol Hill for ACEP's Lobby Day. ACEP members' insight is critical this year as Congress works to shape the nation's delivery of health care. Ensure that emergency medicine is well-represented by registering here now!

Congressional Dine-Arounds & Socials during LAC

NEMPAC will again be hosting Congressional Dine-Arounds and Socials for key members of congress during the LAC. Consider joining ACEP leaders and influential lawmakers at one of these exclusive events. A minimum donation to the Member of Congress' campaign is suggested for participation, which will be combined with the support provided by NEMPAC.

Confirmed legislators include: Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT), Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-CA), Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-OH), Rep. Mike Burgess (R-TX) and Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR).

For additional information, contact ACEP Political Affairs Director Jeanne Slade at jslade@acep.org.



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