



ACEP 911 Network Weekly Update: January 13, 2017

The House is not in session next week due to the MLK Day Holiday followed by a district work period. The Senate will be in session beginning Tuesday and will continue conducting a series of hearings on President-elect Trump's cabinet nominees.

On Friday, January 20, the Inauguration of President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence will take place on the Capitol grounds. For more information, [click here](#).

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House Passes ACEP-supported EMS Bill

This week, the House passed H.R. 304, the "Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act," with a unanimous roll call vote of 404-0. The legislation almost made it to the finish line in the 114th Congress but was held up in the final hours in the Senate. The legislation was one of the first to be reintroduced in the new Congress last week by its original sponsors, Rep. Richard Hudson (R-NC) and Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC). This legislation has been a priority for ACEP for the last two years. The bill would ensure continued access to pain and anti-seizure medications for patients suffering medical emergencies. It will explicitly permit physician medical directors to issue standing orders to EMS personnel so they may administer controlled substances to their patients. In addition, the legislation clarifies and codifies who is authorized to provide verbal orders for controlled substances; provides the option for a single EMS agency registration; and clarifies receipt, movement and storage rules for EMS agency controlled substances. *ACEP will continue to work with a coalition of stakeholders to gain Senate approval and the President's signature early this year.*

House Action on Budget Resolution

The House passed a budget resolution today on a near party-line vote, 227-198, paving the way for repeal of the ACA. The action follows Senate passage of the budget, 51-48, which took place in the early hours of Thursday morning after a contentious seven-hour debate (see story below). Now that both chambers have passed the budget, Republicans have a powerful

procedural tool known as reconciliation available to repeal the healthcare law. Reconciliation requires only a simple majority and can circumvent a filibuster in the Senate, where otherwise 60 votes are needed to pass legislation.

Senate Action on Budget Resolution

Senate Republicans launched their effort to repeal and replace the ACA healthcare law early Thursday morning, approving a budget resolution, 51-48 along party lines, which relies on the same budget process used seven years ago to approve the landmark healthcare law to now attempt to dismantle it.

Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), one of the most vocal GOP opponents of voting on a repeal bill without a replacement package, voted against the budget resolution and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) was absent.

Before Thursday's vote, a political spectacle known as "vote-a-rama" unfolded on the Senate floor.

Democrats used the largely symbolic exercise -- which began Wednesday evening and stretched into wee hours of Thursday -- to defend the Affordable Care Act. Republicans, meanwhile, stressed the harmful impact of the law and the urgent need to do away with it.

Senators introduced more than 160 amendments to the budget resolution. Although these votes were non-binding and the budget resolution doesn't require the president's signature, the process helped crystallize the Democratic Party's top priorities as it looks to defend the major pillars of Obamacare.

The most important amendments for Democrats were aimed at preserving what they argue are popular provisions of Obamacare such as allowing young adults to stay on their parents insurance until age 26 and protecting measures dealing with pre-existing conditions and reproductive healthcare services for women.

Trump's Plan

President-elect Donald Trump increased the pressure this week, calling on Republican leaders to act as quickly as possible and remains adamant that Congress vote on repealing and replacing Obamacare more or less at the same time. This is a significant divergence from the party's initial thinking that it would first vote on repeal before considering replacement options.

In a news conference on Wednesday, President-elect Trump told reporters that a plan will be unveiled soon after his nominee for Secretary of HHS, Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), is confirmed.

Republicans on the Hill do not yet have a plan for replacing Obamacare, and are considering a series of possible legislative paths to replace what they vote to repeal. Senior leaders are currently weighing the option of incremental replacement bills. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) said this week that Republicans will hash out a strategy to replace the law at the joint House-Senate GOP retreat in Philadelphia the week after the inauguration.

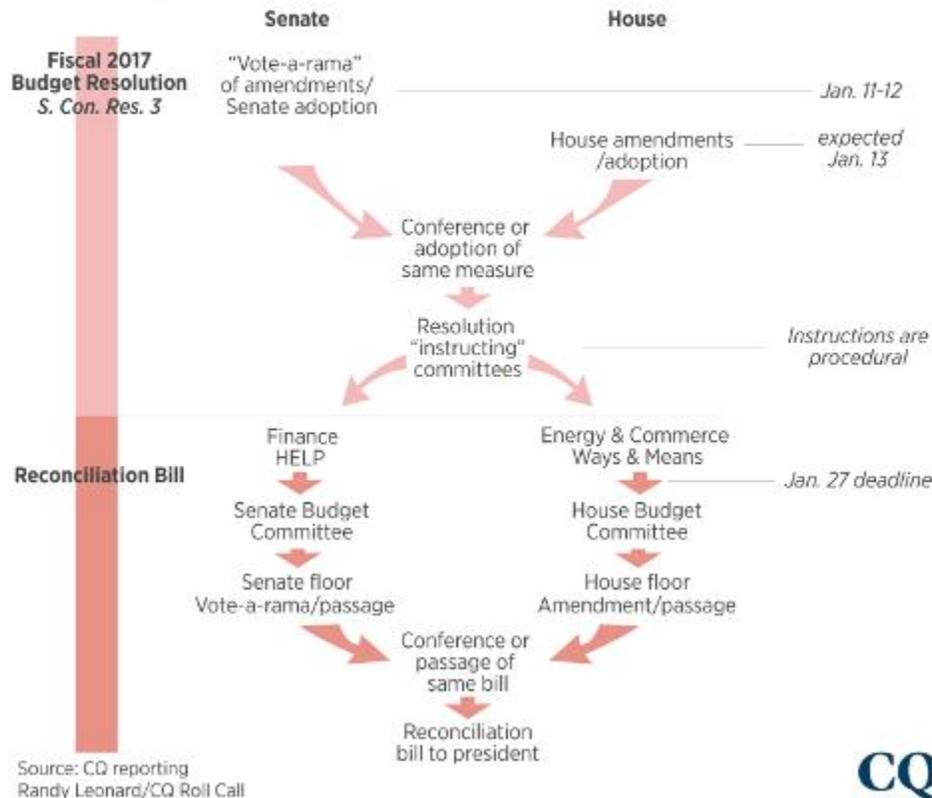
For example, they are exploring whether replacement measures could be inserted into the "repeal" reconciliation bill, which Republicans hope to vote on by late February or March. Leaders are also looking into whether any replacement or healthcare reform measures could be inserted into reauthorization bills that Congress is expected to take up later this year.

ACEP Healthcare Reform Principles Sent to Hill Leaders

ACEP wants to be a constructive participant in the upcoming decisions regarding the future of health care with the goal of maximizing access, improving quality and reducing costs. ACEP President Rebecca Parker, MD, FACEP sent a letter to congressional leadership last week which highlighted these and other ACEP's key principles for health care reform. The principles are available on the [ACEP Advocacy website](#).

The Steps to GOP's Plan for Obamacare Repeal

In an effort to dismantle the 2010 health care law, Republican lawmakers are using the convoluted process of budget reconciliation, which includes the passage of two measures. Some provisions to replace the system could be included in this process or may follow as separate legislation. Here's how their plan would proceed.



First Hearing for HHS Secretary Nominee Price

Wednesday of next week, the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee will hold a hearing on the nomination of physician and Republican Congressman Tom Price of Georgia to serve as the next Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS.) Ultimately, the Senate Finance Committee is the determining panel that will bring Price's nomination up for a vote in the Senate. The Finance hearing has not yet been officially

noticed. To view the HELP committee hearing, please [click here](#).

Dr. David Schulkin Nominated for Secretary of Veterans Affairs

President-elect Donald Trump tapped David Schulkin, the current undersecretary of health at the VA, as his next secretary of Veterans Affairs. Schulkin, a physician and hospital executive who was appointed undersecretary in March 2015, told a Senate committee in June that the agency is likely to eliminate its open-source system VistA electronic health record for a commercial, off-the-shelf system. Before joining VA, Shulkin was president of the Morristown Medical Center in New Jersey and, earlier, president and chief executive of the Beth Israel Medical Center in New York City.

ACEP Leadership & Advocacy Conference – Mark your calendar!

With a new Administration, Congress, and legislative agenda, the need for your involvement is greater than ever before. Please join your colleagues and emergency medicine leaders from across the country at ACEP's 2017 Leadership and Advocacy Conference, March 12-15, 2017. [Please see this link](#) featuring **confirmed speaker ZDoggMD** who will address participants on Monday, March 13. For further details about the meeting and to register, [please click here](#).



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