



BENJAMIN ROSE
INSTITUTE ON AGING
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June 2019

Health Care Costs Legislation Clears Senate HELP Committee

On June 26, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee approved S.1895, the Lower Health Care Costs Act. The legislation is a large package of bills which, among many other provisions, would:

- Eliminate “surprise billing”
- Streamline the generic and biosimilar prescription drugs creation and approval process
- Increase transparency by removing gag clauses on price and quality information
- Create a national campaign to increase awareness and knowledge of the safety and effectiveness of vaccines

The bill is tentatively expected to receive a vote in the full Senate in July.

Recent Bills from Ohio Members of Congress

Several Ohio members of Congress, including Sens. Sherrod Brown and Rob Portman and Rep. Robert Latta, have sponsored bills recently that would impact older adults:

- **Senator Brown:** Sponsored [S. 1357](#), the Nurse Staffing Standards for Hospital Patient Safety and Quality Care Act of 2019. This bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals.
- **Senator Portman:** Sponsored [S. 1928](#), the Enrollment Reshaping Entry For Older, Retiring Members Act or the Enrollment REFORM Act. This bill would work to coordinate Medicare benefits with other health care insurance and limit the documentation an individual is required to provide in order to demonstrate employment-based health insurance for purposes of avoiding the part B late enrollment penalty.
- **Representative Latta:** Sponsored [H.R. 2386](#), the Support Tools to Obliterate Pesky Robocalls Act or the STOP Robocalls Act. This bill would provide for information sharing regarding robocall and spoofing violations, authorize the provision of a robocall blocking service with opt-out customer approval, and provide for a study on information requirements for certain VoIP service providers.

Older American's Act Funding and Reauthorization

The full House has passed their Labor-HHS-Education funding bill, which contains numerous increases for aging programs, including many Older Americans Act (OAA) programs. The Senate has not yet acted on this bill, nor has it released its own proposed funding levels.

The OAA reauthorization is seeing slow progress. The Senate is currently revising its discussion draft following input from outside organizations. They hope to introduce an OAA bill shortly after the July 4 recess. The House has held a hearing on the Older Americans Act but currently has not given a timetable for its reauthorization plans. The OAA authorization expires September 30.

Elder Justice Coalition Holds Robocalls Webinar

On June 27, the Elder Justice Coalition, of which Benjamin Rose is a member, held a webinar called "Stopping Robocalls Once and For All." The webinar featured Ian Barlow from the Federal Trade Commission and discussed legislative and regulatory efforts to stop robocalls, which can scam older adults.

Request for Information: Nutrition and Aging Providers

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) seeks feedback from Nutrition and Aging Network Providers (i.e., Area Agencies on Aging, local nutrition service providers, etc.) on: 1) the types of nutrition programs and services technical assistance you are currently or have previously received; and 2) the types of nutrition programs and services technical assistance that you would find useful in the future.

RFI Questions

1. What nutrition programs and services technical assistance have you received from ACL, AoA's National Resource Center on Nutrition and Aging, or other individuals or organizations (within or outside of the Aging Network) for your nutrition-related efforts and challenges?
2. What technical assistance topics and formats do you think would be most useful to help with your future nutrition-related efforts and challenges? Examples include things like trainings, webinars, expert consultation, or tangible resources (i.e., fact sheets, issue briefs, etc.).

Response Submission

Comments must be received by Friday, August 2. Submit your response to healthpromotion@acl.hhs.gov with "RFI – Nutrition" in the subject line. Please submit feedback in this format:

- Name of respondent
- Preferred contact email
- Organizational affiliation(s)
- Response to Question #1
- Response to Question #2

Contact Us

We welcome your feedback!
Please share questions,
suggestions or concerns.

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