



Federal Legislative Activities Week of December 14, 2015

Please find a listing of federal legislative activities the County and our federal advocates are monitoring during the week of December 14, 2015, below. There are few hearings this week, due to the fluid schedule of Congress and their focus on finishing the omnibus appropriations package.

Congressional Hearings and Floor Activity

Tuesday, December 15th

2 PM | House will meet for legislative business to consider:

[H.R. 3654](#) - Combat Terrorist Use of Social Media Act of 2015, as amended

Wednesday, December 16th and the balance of the week

Legislation Considered Under Suspension of the Rules:

[H.R. 3750](#) - First Responders Passport Act of 2015, as amended. This bill waives passport fees for disaster response teams that assist in international relief efforts. Under the measure, the State Department must report to Congress on the number of waivers issued under the bill.

[S. 1347](#) - Electronic Health Fairness Act of 2015, as amended. The bill provides a blanket hardship exception from meaningful use requirements for 2017, under which any health care provider or hospital could request that they not lose any Medicare funding that year because they failed to meet electronic health records standards (the Health and Human Services (HHS) Department currently has authority to grant waivers). The bill delays through the end of plan year 2019 the authority of CMS to terminate Medicare Advantage contracts for plans that fail to achieve minimum quality ratings under the STARS rating system. CMS uses a five-star rating system (also known as STARS) to evaluate Medicare Advantage plans and to determine whether to terminate them. The system includes categories of factors such as screening and tests for staying healthy, management of chronic conditions and member complaints. Some members say the STARS rating system is particularly demanding for Medicare Advantage plans that cover low-income individuals in particularly poor health. The bill requires CMS to annually report enrollment data on Medicare Advantage plans.