

HEALTH WEEK: ADVANCING PATIENT-CENTERED, PRO-GROWTH REFORMS

This week, the U.S. House of Representatives will take steps toward restoring America's health care system to a patient-centric model. The House will consider a series of health-related bills as part of a comprehensive pro-growth agenda. The *Budget for a Brighter American Future*, the House fiscal year 2019 budget resolution, also contained a number of important health care reforms.

Earlier this month, the House Ways and Means Committee marked up and subsequently reported several health-related bills that improve consumer choice, reduce the high cost of health care coverage, and alleviate the burden of existing health taxes. If enacted, the legislation will provide broad-based relief to the American public.

Legislative Focus of Health Week. Health Week focuses on three areas which need improvement within the American health system: repealing harmful Obamacare taxes, expanding the use of popular and flexible health savings accounts (HSAs), and creating an off-ramp for Americans who want to leave the broken health exchanges.

By removing some Obamacare taxes, Health Week legislation would provide relief for all Americans by reducing insurance costs. Specifically, the packages under consideration this week would repeal the medical device excise tax and delay the health insurance tax that affects nearly all patients.

If enacted, legislation under consideration would also modernize the use of HSAs, which are personal, tax-deductible accounts used exclusively for medical expenses. Solutions likely to be debated this week would increase the maximum contribution limit, make bronze and catastrophic plans eligible for HSA contributions, and allow HSAs to cover higher out-of-pocket costs. Among other expansions, the legislation would remove current restrictions on using HSAs to pay for over-the-counter medicines and certain feminine care products, demonstrating the House's commitment to women's health.

Finally, Health Week aims to provide an off-ramp from insurance exchanges so that Americans can have greater freedom of choice with their health care. It does so by removing restrictions on lower-premium catastrophic plans to allow anyone to purchase one.

Budget-Supported Priorities. Health Week demonstrates that the House's priorities reflect the vision outlined in the House Budget Committee-reported fiscal year 2019 budget resolution. The *Budget for a Brighter American Future* calls for policies that promote economic growth and restore the proper role of government and, if adopted, achieves \$8.1 trillion in savings over the next decade and balances the federal budget in nine years. The Health Week measures are a key legislative step toward achieving pro-growth reforms and putting Americans in charge of their own health care decisions.

