



Press Release

Health Care Provisions in the Latest Coronavirus Response Bill

ANDREW EVANS | APRIL 21, 2020

With the Paycheck Protection Program, which supports the payrolls of small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, running out of money, leaders of Congress and the White House today reached a deal to increase funding. AAF's Director of Health Care Policy Christopher Holt outlines the health care provisions in this new bill. While several of the health-related spending allocations in the earlier Coronavirus Aid, Response, and Economic Support (CARES) Act became controversial, this bill does little to change them, Holt notes.

Holt concludes:

While Republicans have been pushing for a clean funding bump for the Paycheck Protection Program without any additional funding priorities, the legislation's \$100 billion for health providers and expanded testing was substantially more limited than what Democrats were initially seeking. Additionally, while the mechanisms around distributing public health dollars under CARES have left some members of Congress and state leaders frustrated, it is not surprising that this agreement does not take a more active role dictating how the dollars will be distributed. The complicated reality of lawmaking through unanimous consent and voice votes leaves little wiggle room for changes. Further, it is unlikely this will be the last time Congress considers additional funding related to the health care response to the pandemic.

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