The Biden Administration is Off and Running

Immediately after President Biden’s inauguration on January 21, 2021, he and his team got to work. After being sworn in, President Biden went to the White House where he issued a plethora of Executive Actions, throughout his first week in office, that affect immigration, public health, COVID-19 response, climate, international travel, and discrimination.

After issuing these orders, President Biden received criticism from House and Senate Republicans stating that unilateral Executive Action is not working in a bipartisan way and will not help Biden’s goal of uniting the country.

In addition to President Biden’s Executive Actions, he released a $1.9 trillion COVID-19 stimulus plan that provides money for states and local governments, individual stimulus checks, funding for vaccine distribution, and more money for hospitals. That plan was also met with opposition by House and Senate Republicans, stating that it is too expensive and does not provide the targeted relief that is needed. President Biden indicated that he is more than willing to work with Republicans to find a bipartisan COVID-19 deal, however he would also consider using budget reconciliation, a parliamentary process that is filibuster proof, to pass his plan should a bipartisan agreement not be reached.

Below you will find more information on President Biden’s Executive Actions related to health, President Biden’s COVID-19 relief plan, and budget reconciliation.

President Biden’s Executive Orders on Health

In his first week in office, President Biden issued a number of Executive Actions aimed at public health, COVID-19 mitigation, and the health supply chain. Below you will find relevant Executive Actions with short summaries.

Executive Order on Strengthening Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act
This Executive Order, issued on January 28, 2021, issues a special enrollment period for uninsured and under-insured Americans to seek coverage through the Federally Facilitated Marketplace. Additionally, the order directs all departments and agencies with authorities related to Medicaid and ACA to review existing regulations, orders, guidance, and policy to determine if they are inconsistent with the new Biden administration policy.

Executive Order on Establishing the COVID-19 Pandemic Testing Board and Ensuring a Sustainable Public Health Workforce for COVID-19 and Other Biological Threats
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, uses a government-wide approach to establish a COVID-19 testing and workforce strategy, increase the supply of tests, bring test
manufacturing to the United States, enhance laboratory testing capacity, work to expand the public health workforce, and support screening testing for schools and other priority populations. The order also establishes a COVID-19 Pandemic Testing Board that is made up by representatives from executive departments and agencies and chaired by the COVID-19 Response Coordinator. The board’s mission is to support the implementation and oversight of the policies detailed above.

**Executive Order on Protecting Worker Health and Safety**
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, directs federal agencies, primarily the Secretary of Labor, to review worker protections and improve these protections if necessary in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. For workers not covered by OSHA, the order directs federal agencies, including the Department of Transportation, to explore mechanisms to protect workers.

**Executive Order on Supporting the Reopening and Continuing Operation of Schools and Early Childhood Education Providers**
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, directs the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to provide evidenced based guidance to assist States, elementary and secondary schools, and institutions of higher education on how and whether to reopen. The order also requires the Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue guidance on how to safely conduct in-person learning and implement mitigation measures. In doing this, they are also ordered to establish various mechanisms for States, schools, and other education institutions to share best practices. The order also directs the Department of Education to collect data on how the pandemic has affected various groups of students.

**Executive Order on Ensuring an Equitable Pandemic Response and Recovery**
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, establishes a COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force within the Department of Health and Human Services. The task force shall provide specific recommendations to the President for mitigating health inequities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the ultimate goal of preventing such inequities in the future. Additionally, all other agencies are directed to consult with the Health Equity Task Force when making decisions on pandemic response that could cause health inequities.

**Executive Order on a Sustainable Public Health Supply Chain**
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, calls for immediate action to secure supplies that are necessary for responding to the pandemic. These supplies need to be and remain available to the Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities, as well as America’s health care workers and patients. In order to do this, the order calls for immediate inventory of response supplies and the identification of emergency needs. Additionally, the order directs the heads of departments and agencies to address the pricing of pandemic response supplies and to develop a pandemic supply chain resilience strategy.

**Memorandum to Extend Federal Support to Governors’ Use of the National Guard to Respond to COVID-19 and to Increase Reimbursement and Other Assistance Provided to States**
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, extends the federal support of operations or missions to prevent and respond to the spread of COVID-19 of the National Guard. The order
directs all State and territorial governors to order National Guard forces to fulfill mission assignments directed by FEMA under the Stafford Act, on a fully reimbursable bases.

Executive Order on Ensuring a Data-Driven Response to COVID-19 and Future High-Consequence Public Health Threats
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, directs the heads of all executive departments and agencies to facilitate the gathering, sharing, and publication of COVID-19 related data to the extent permitted by the law. This data will be used to assist Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial authorities to influence decision-making to further public understanding of the pandemic and the response, and to deter the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

Executive Order on Improving and Expanding Access to Care and Treatments for COVID-19
This Executive Order, issued on January 21, 2021, directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Director of the National Institutes of Health, to accelerate the development of novel therapies to treat COVID-19, and to improve access to quality and affordable healthcare. In addition to accelerating the development of novel therapies, the order seeks to improve the capacity of the Nation’s healthcare systems to address COVID-19.

Executive Order on Organizing and Mobilizing the United States Government to Provide a Unified and Effective Response to Combat COVID-19 and to Provide United States Leadership on Global Health and Security
This Executive Order, issued on January 20, 2021, directs the federal government to act swiftly to combat COVID-19. The order also establishes a new position within the administration, a “Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response and Counselor to the President” who will coordinate the government wide effort to combat COVID-19.

COVID-19 Relief Update and Budget Reconciliation
Even before President Biden was inaugurated on January 20, 2021, he released his $1.9 trillion package to provide economic relief to Americans and fund an expansive pandemic health response. The package includes but is not limited to:

- $415 billion to help address the public health crisis caused by the pandemic to include:
  - $20 billion to set up a national vaccination program with the goal of vaccinating 100 million people in his first 100 days
  - $50 million to scale up diagnostic testing
  - $130 billion to support reopening schools
- $1 trillion in direct aid to individuals and families
  - $1,400 individual stimulus checks
  - Extend key unemployment developments benefits
  - $30 billion in rental assistance funds
- $440 billion in aid to businesses
  - $15 billion in small business grants
  - $175 billion in investment
- $350 billion in state and local aid
Upon releasing the package, President Biden indicated that he would like to work with Congress to pass a bipartisan bill. However, he would not approve a package that did not “meet the moment.”

On February 1st, 2021, a group of 10 Republican Senators released a counter-offer to President Biden’s COVID-19 relief plan. The Republican plan totals $600 billion and cuts individual payments from $1,400 to $1,000 and caps the salary for those payments at $50,000. The Republican counter-offer was largely seen as a starting point for negotiations and the group of 10 Republican Senators went to the White House to meet with President Biden to officially start the negotiating process.

However, while the negotiating process had just started, President Biden and Congressional leaders began the process of using a parliamentary procedure called budget reconciliation to pass President Biden’s $1.9 trillion bill. Budget reconciliation uses the Congressional budget process to put monetary policy that has to do with taxation, spending, or debt into law. Additionally, the process only requires a simple majority of 51 votes in the Senate rather than the traditional 60. Should every single Democrat in the Senate, plus Vice President Kamala Harris, vote for the reconciliation bill, it will be sent to the President and signed into law. The process starts by both Chambers of Congress passing a budget resolution for the fiscal year. Both Chambers of Congress released their identical budgets on February 2, 2021.

Democrats in Congress and the President are being met with resistance by Senate and House Republicans who are unhappy the administration is moving forward without the support of Republicans. Additionally, they feel that passing a COVID-19 relief bill by using budget reconciliation does not signify “unity,” which is something President Biden campaigned on.

PRG will continue to provide updates on budget reconciliation and will provide updates moving forward.

President Biden’s Growing Health Team

The confirmation of President Biden’s pick for HHS Secretary, Xavier Becerra, is being delayed by the Senate’s inability to pass a power-sharing agreement. Becerra has yet to have a nomination hearing, let alone a vote for his confirmation by the Senate. However, that has not stopped President Biden from expanding his health team both within HHS and the White House. While some of President Biden’s transition team will still continue to play a role in the administration, below are the people who will be directly impacting President Biden’s health agenda moving forward.

Department of Health and Human Services Leadership

- **Xavier Becerra** – Nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services
- **Rachel Levine** – Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services
- **Andrea Palm** – Nominee for Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services
- **Dr. Vivek Murthy** - Nominee for Surgeon General

White House
Dr. Anthony Fauci – Chief Medical Advisor  
Jeff Zients – Coordinator of COVID-19 Response  
Dr. Natalie Quillian – Deputy Coordinator of COVID-19 Response  
Andy Slavitt – Senior Advisor for COVID-19 Response  
Dawn O’Connell – Senior Counselor for COVID-19 Response  
A.J. Pearlman – Chief of Staff for COVID-19 Response  
Kathryn Alvarez – Deputy Chief of Staff for COVID-19 Response  
Topher Spiro – Office of Management and Budget, Director for Health  

White House Coronavirus Task Force  

• Xavier Becerra, Nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services  
• Dr. Vivek Murthy, Nominee for Surgeon General  
• Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Nominee for Director of the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention  
• Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith, COVID-19 Equity Task Force Chair  
• Dr. Anthony Fauci, Chief Medical Advisor on COVID-19 to the President  

This is a constantly expanding list as President Biden continues to expand his team. PRG will continue to update this list moving forward.  

How Congress is Shaping Up  

While the House of Representatives hit the ground running on the 117th Congress, the Senate has been considerably slower to start normal legislative work. This is largely due to the failure of now Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and now Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell’s (R-KY) inability to come to a power sharing agreement for the 50-50 split Senate, such as then Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) and then Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) came to during the last 50-50 Senate split in 2001. While the 2001 agreement is likely to serve as a framework for this agreement, it will need updating to reflect this year’s Senate.  

The inability to reach an agreement has stalled much of the Senate’s work, such as conducting nomination hearings for President Biden’s cabinet picks. While some of President Biden’s picks, such as Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, have had their hearings and subsequently been confirmed, others such as Health and Human Services Secretary Nominee Xavier Becerra and Attorney General Nominee Merrick Garland, have yet to start the confirmation process at all.  

Upon the passage of a power sharing agreement, it is likely President Biden’s cabinet picks will be moved through the Senate quickly.  

Fallout From the January 6th Attack on the Capitol
There has been considerable political fallout from the storming of the U.S. Capitol Building on January 6th, 2021 during the certification of the 2020 Presidential Election. Even after Congress returned to certify the election after the attack, many Republicans still objected to and opposed the certification. Soon after the vote, many organizations and corporations stated that they would not give any political donations to an incumbent who voted against certifying the election. Some companies have said this will only last 6 months and will reassess the situation, others have stated that they will never give to any incumbent who voted not to certify the election again.

While it is still very early in the 2022 election cycle, these developments, and measures taken by these companies and organizations could have lasting impacts on close races in 2022. Many Democratic candidates attempting to unseat incumbent Republicans who voted not to certify the election will have a fundraising jump on their opponents, allowing them to advertise and spend more money to get their name out there.

Midterm elections, such as the 2022 elections, have proven to be difficult for the party in power throughout history. With the slim majority in both the House and Senate, Democrats will have a difficult time holding onto the majority in both chambers of Congress, which could lead to another split government in 2023. However, with the moratorium on significant amount of giving by corporations and companies, Democrats will have a jump on their Republican opponents.

**Is Comprehensive Drug Pricing Finally Achievable?**

With Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) taking over as the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and with Democratic control of the House, Senate, and White House, it is very likely that there is a big and potentially more successful push for comprehensive drug pricing legislation. However, despite the thin majorities in both the House and the Senate, Wyden will need 10 Republican Senators to vote in favor of any sort of drug legislation.

While getting 10 Republican votes could be a difficult task, Senator Wyden could reintroduce a bill he authored in 2020 with Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) that achieved some support from other Republicans in the last Congress. However, that bill was not nearly as comprehensive as H.R. 3, the House Democrat drug pricing legislation that was not brought up for vote in the Senate after passing the House. In order for drug legislation to be passed and sent to the President for signature, Biden will have to win the support of moderate and progressive Democrats, as well as the support of Republicans, a task which has proven difficult.

**U.S. Drug Prices Significantly Higher than in other Countries**

Prescription drug prices are more than 256% higher than in other comparable countries according to a new report by the RAND Corporation. The report shows that the gap in drug prices is driven by the price of brand-name drugs in the U.S.

Drug prices have increased significantly over the last 20 years, jumping 76% between 2000 and 2017. Additionally, the U.S. accounted for 58% of prescription drug sales but just 24% of the prescription drug volume across the world. Additionally, prescription drugs accounted for more
than 10% of all health care spending in the U.S.. Prices for brand name drugs averaged 3.44 times higher than prices for the same drugs in comparable nations. However, generic drugs in the U.S. were 84% lower in the U.S. than what is paid in other nations.

You can view the RAND Corporation Report [HERE](#).

**Up to Date List of Drug Related Legislation for the 117th Congress**

- **H.R. 597**
  This bill, introduced by Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) on January 28, 2021, requires any COVID-19 drug developed in whole or in part with Federal support to be affordable and accessible by prohibiting monopolies and price gouging, and for other purposes.

- **S. 141**
  This bill, introduced by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) on January 28, 2021, amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for advertising and promotional expenses for prescription drugs.

- **H.R. 153**
  This bill, introduced by Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL) on January 4, 2021, prohibits brand name drug manufacturers from compensating generic drug manufacturers to delay the entry of a generic drug into the market, and to prohibit biological product manufacturers from compensating biosimilar and interchangeable product manufacturers to delay entry of biosimilar and interchangeable products, and for other purposes.

**In The News**

**The Hill** (1/29/2021): **Democrats ready to bypass Republicans on COVID-19 relief bill** - Democrats are moving quickly to lay the groundwork for passing additional coronavirus relief, with or without help from Republicans.

**Politico** (1/29/2021): **DEMOCRATS PREPARE TO PUSH COVID AID BILL VIA RECONCILIATION** — Democrats are getting ready to introduce a budget resolution next week, the first step in passing a massive Covid relief bill with only Democratic votes — angering the GOP lawmakers who’ve been meeting with Democrats and White House officials to hammer out a bipartisan deal.

**Axios** (1/28/2021): **U.S. drug prices higher than other countries** - Prescription drug prices in the U.S. are more than 256% higher than other 32 other countries, with the gap driven by brand-name drugs, a new report by nonpartisan RAND Corporation shows.

**Modern Healthcare** (1/28/2021): **Brand-name drugs cost 344% more in U.S. than other countries** - A new RAND Corp. study finds brand-name drugs tend to be much more expensive in the U.S. than more than two dozen comparison countries. Generic drugs, on the other hand, tend to be cheaper.
Modern Healthcare (1/28/2021): Hospitals push CMS to pause ‘most favored nation’ drug-pricing rule - Providers argued the policy is illegal and wouldn't lower drug prices or patients' out-of-pocket costs in comments on the interim final rule. Hospitals suggested CMS doesn't have the power to carry out such a large experiment.

Politico (1/28/2021): WOODCOCK’s FDA CANDIDACY HITS FRESH OPPOSITION — Janet Woodcock, the leading candidate to run Biden’s FDA, is facing growing scrutiny over her decadeslong track record at the agency, including several years overseeing its drug division during the opioid crisis, reports POLITICO’s Sarah Owermohle.

The Hill (1/28/2021): Biden to implement special ACA enrollment period amid pandemic - President Biden will direct federal agencies on Thursday to open a special enrollment period for Affordable Care Act (ACA) exchanges in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and review existing policies from the Trump administration that “limit Americans’ access to health care.”

Politico (1/27/2021): DEMOCRATS’ COVID CROSSROADS: GO BIG OR BIPARTISAN? — Democrats are debating how to pass the next Covid relief bill, with progressives pushing to unilaterally advance a massive rescue package while moderate lawmakers insist there’s still time to make a deal, POLITICO’s Burgess Everett, Sarah Ferris and Caitlin Emma report.

The Hill (1/27/2021): White House goes full-throttle on COVID-19 relief talks - The White House is moving forward with a range of meetings with lawmakers and other stakeholders as President Biden urges the passage of his $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief proposal.

Politico (1/26/2021): BECERRA’S HEARINGS HELD UP — The Senate HELP Committee is holding off on tentative plans for Becerra’s Senate hearings, amid a leadership stalemate over the filibuster, POLITICO’s Alice Miranda Ollstein reports.

The Hill (1/26/2021): Biden’s bipartisan push hits wall on COVID-19 relief bill - President Biden is facing a tough choice just days into his administration on how to pursue coronavirus relief after his $1.9 trillion proposal got a frosty reception from Republicans.

Politico (1/25/2021): PHRMA CHALLENGES NEW HHS 340B MOVE — The pharmaceutical lobby on Friday asked a federal court to throw out HHS’ new process to resolve big-money disputes between manufacturers and hospitals over drug discounts for poor patients.

Politico (1/25/2021): SENATORS UNIFIED ON VAX MONEY, NOT STIMULUS CHECKS — Negotiations over another Covid relief bill kicked off in earnest on Sunday in a Zoom call between a dozen senators and three top White House officials, POLITICO’s Alice Miranda Ollstein reports.

Modern Healthcare (1/22/2021): HHS freezes rule targeting community health centers’ drug discounts -Community health centers, patient advocates and other groups have said the changes are unnecessary and could do more harm than good. HHS signed off on the rule in December in the waning days of the Trump administration.

Politico (1/22/2021): WANTED: AN FDA COMMISSIONER — The search for one of the most critical jobs in the Biden administration’s effort to battle the pandemic continues as the new president looks for a “battle-worn” expert to take the mantle at the agency.
Politico (1/22/2021): **BIDEN’S BIG STIMULUS PLAN GETS A REALITY CHECK** — Republicans are warning Biden’s $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief proposal can’t get 60 votes, essentially daring the new administration to either compromise with the GOP or use partisan procedural tactics to evade a filibuster, POLITICO’s Burgess Everett writes.

Politico (1/22/2021): **SENATE POWER STRUGGLE DELAYS HHS SECRETARY CONFIRMATION HEARING** — An ongoing feud between Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell is delaying efforts to schedule a confirmation hearing for Xavier Becerra, Biden’s pick to run the federal health department.

Politico (1/21/2021): **BIDEN BUILDS OUT HIS COVID RESPONSE - THERE’S ONLY ONE PROBLEM:** The plan so far is just a broad sketch — and it’s the details that will determine the administration’s success. That leaves Biden waiting on Congress to help flesh those out, POLITICO’s Heather Caygle, Sarah Ferris and Caitlin Emma report.

Modern Healthcare (1/20/2021): **FCC Chairman Pai on funding telehealth, 5G and the digital divide** - FCC Chairman Ajit Pai talks with Modern Healthcare about telehealth barriers, the agency’s new Connected Care Pilot Program and why he hopes to continue working on telehealth issues after stepping down from his agency post.

Axios (1/20/2021): **The public health presidency** - Joe Biden will take office today facing a challenge none of his modern predecessors have had to reckon with — his legacy will depend largely on how well he handles a once-in-a-century pandemic that’s already raging out of control.

Politico (1/20/2021): **CMS TAPS VETERAN STAFFERS AS ACTING HEADS** — Liz Richter and Jeff Wu — two longtime career staffers — will temporarily lead CMS under the Biden administration, according to an all-staff email from Verma that was later obtained by POLITICO.

Modern Healthcare (1/19/2021): **CMS finalizes drug transparency, pharmacy quality rules** - CMS estimates the changes will save the federal government $75.4 million over the next decade in Medicare Advantage and Part D payments.

Politico (1/19/2021): **BIDEN’s HEALTH TEAM TAKES SHAPE** — Biden’s selection of Andrea Palm for the No. 2 job at HHS is aimed at aiding an incoming administration with a lengthy agenda and a need to show results fast. Palm — a Wisconsin state health official who previously held several senior positions in the Obama HHS — already knows the department well, putting her in a prime position to manage its day-to-day operations.

The Hill (1/15/2021): **Biden unveils $1.9 trillion COVID relief plan** - President-elect Joe Biden will ask Congress for $1.9 trillion to provide economic relief to Americans and businesses and help fund a $415 billion plan to fight the coronavirus.

Axios (1/14/2021): **Drug companies keep raising prices** - More than 100 pharmaceutical companies raised prices on over 600 drugs at the beginning of the new year, according to a new report from the advocacy group Patients for Affordable Drugs.
**Politico** (1/14/2021): **WHAT’s ON FINANCE LEADER RON WYDEN’s AGENDA**—The incoming chair of the powerful Senate Finance Committee will make another push for sweeping drug price legislation and seek to shore up Obamacare, POLITICO’s Susannah Luthi reports.

**Politico** (1/14/2021): **TRUMP’s PROMISED DRUG CARDS AREN’T COMING** — That’s what officials now concede, despite White House aides pledging for months that the $200 drug-discount cards for seniors were just around the corner. "It would take days to get all the sign-offs we still need, plus the time to print the letters and make the cards," one official involved in the process told POLITICO's Dan Diamond. "We ran out of time."

**Politico** (1/14/2021): **BIDEN MAKES HIS BIG COVID PITCH** — Joe Biden will begin rolling out plans for ending the pandemic and boosting the economy, highlighted by a speech this evening that could set the tone for his early presidency.

**Modern Healthcare** (1/13/2021): **Cigna to stop contributions to some lawmakers following Capitol riots** - In an email, Cigna said its political action committee will "discontinue support of any elected official who encouraged or supported violence, or otherwise hindered a peaceful transition of power."

**Politico** (1/13/2021): **PHRMA CUTS OFF DONATIONS TO ELECTION OBJECTORS** — The powerful drug lobby is pausing its contributions to lawmakers who voted against certifying Biden’s election — making it one of the highest-profile health lobbies to reconsider political giving after the Capitol riot, POLITICO’s David Lim reports.

**Politico** (1/13/2021): **TENSE FINAL DAYS INSIDE TRUMP’s FDA** — HHS and the FDA are spending the Trump administration’s last days locked in another power struggle, after the health department blindsided the FDA with a series of major policy changes, POLITICO’s Sarah Owermohle and Adam Cancryn report.

**Modern Healthcare** (1/12/2021): **Mental health treatment was most common telehealth service during COVID** - The study shows that 53.6% of patients with a behavioral health condition sought treatment via telehealth from mid-March to early May of 2020. By comparison, 43.2% of patients with a chronic physical condition used telehealth to receive care during the same period.

**Politico** (1/12/2021): **PATIENT ADVOCATES TO BIDEN: Rx PRICING REFORMS NEEDED NOW** — The Biden administration should immediately implement policy changes to slash drug costs, Public Citizen and 24 other consumer and patient advocacy groups urged the transition team, POLITICO’s Sarah Owermohle reports.

**Politico** (1/8/2021): **One potential area of bipartisanship: drug pricing** - The issue has registered for years as one of the public’s top concerns, even amid the pandemic. And Republican respondents to the poll ranked addressing high prices as their third-most important priority, behind Covid-19 relief and economic stimulus.

**Modern Healthcare** (1/7/2021): **Six healthcare policies Democrats could push with control of the Senate** - Democrats will have much more latitude to pursue their healthcare agenda with a trifecta government.
Politico (1/7/2021): **WHAT JOE BIDEN IS INHERITING** — For an incoming president who’s betting the country will be receptive to his calls for newfound harmony, consider this week an ominous start.

Axios (1/6/2021): **Georgia results shake up Dems' health agenda** - If both Democrats ultimately pull off wins in Georgia’s Senate races, they’ll secure a narrow Democratic majority and increase the odds that significant health care legislation could become law.

Politico (1/6/2021): **BIDEN’s HEALTH AMBITIONS JUST GOT BIGGER** — If Democrats’ lead in a Georgia runoff holds, it would give Biden 50 votes in the Senate – and breathe a whole lot of life into his administration’s health care plans.

Modern Healthcare (1/5/2021): **Some drugmakers may not comply with HHS 340B opinion on contract pharmacies** - HHS’ advisory opinion doesn't have the force of law and some drugmakers have signaled defiance.

Politico (1/5/2021): **WHAT RESTS ON GEORGIA**... other than everything? Big chunks of President-elect Joe Biden’s health care agenda, for starters.

Politico Pro (1/4/2021): **BUT BID GOODBYE TO ONE PHARMA POLICY: MOST-FAVORED NATIONS** — Just days before the rule was set to go into effect on Jan. 1, a California judge issued a preliminary injunction that essentially leaves the rule in the new president’s hands, POLITICO’s Sarah Owermohle writes.

Modern Healthcare (1/4/2021): **Connectivity: a social determinant of health that can exacerbate all the others** - It’s time to see broadband access as a utility, like electricity and plumbing. The longer our connectivity disparity continues, the more we will leave people behind.

---

Bracewell LLP makes this information available for educational purposes. This information does not offer specific legal advice or create an attorney-client relationship with the firm. Do not use this information as a substitute for specific legal advice. Attorney advertising.

Bracewell is a leading law and government relations firm primarily serving the energy, infrastructure, finance and technology sectors throughout the world.

Our industry focus results in comprehensive state-of-the-art knowledge of the commercial, legal and governmental challenges faced by our clients and enables us to provide innovative solutions to facilitate transactions and resolve disputes.

If you are an EU citizen and would like to be forgotten, please click [here](#).