

PUBLICATION

Congress Passes Government Funding Measures

Authors: Sheila P. Burke

December 22, 2017

On December 21, Congress passed a bill to continue funding the government through January 19, 2018, averting a potential government shutdown ahead of the December 22, 2017, deadline for the previous funding measure. The House voted 231 – 188 and the Senate voted 66 – 32 to pass the measure.

In addition to funding the federal government, the bill extends funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) through March 31, 2018, reauthorizes the Foreign Intelligence Service Act until January 19, 2018, and provides extra funding for certain defense and veterans programs.

It also includes several specific provisions affecting health care, including:

- \$550 million for Community Health Centers
- \$65 million for the National Health Service Corps
- \$15 million for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program for the first and second quarters of fiscal year (FY) 2018
- \$37.5 million for the Special Diabetes Program for Type 1 Diabetes for the first and second quarters of FY 2018

These health care provisions would be paid for by redirecting \$750 million from the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Prevention and Public Health Fund. Finally, the funding bill would waive the pay-as-you-go or PAYGO rules for the GOP tax bill, passed by Congress earlier this week, preventing an estimated \$120 billion per year in reductions to government programs, including Medicare.

The House also passed an \$81 billion emergency disaster aid bill aimed at providing support to Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and California for the hurricane and wildfire natural disasters. The bill was approved on a vote of 251 – 169. The Senate did not bring the measure up for a vote and plans to address the issue in the new year.