

May 30, 2014

IN THIS REPORT...

1. White House Invites AAFP to Summit on Concussion
2. House Subcommittee Approves Prescription Drug Abuse Measures
3. AAFP Calls on House Appropriators to Retain FDA Authority over Cigars
4. House Approves Prescription Drug Monitoring Grants & Gun Background Checks
5. FamMedPAC Active in California Primary and Kansas This Week
6. AAFP Nominates Dr. Epling to National Vaccine Advisory Committee
7. Regulatory Briefs
8. GAO Announces MedPAC Appointments and Designates Vice Chair

NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON...

- * The Senate will vote on the confirmation of Sylvia Burwell to the post of HHS Secretary.
- * The House will be in recess.

1. AAFP ATTENDS WHITE HOUSE SUMMIT ON CONCUSSIONS

On May 29, Dr. Blackwelder and Government Relations staff represented the AAFP at the [White House's Healthy Kids & Safe Sports Concussion Summit](#). The event will be held in the East Room of the White House and featured remarks from the President. In those remarks, President Obama noted the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's recent report on concussion indicates that young people made nearly 250,000 emergency room visits with brain injuries from sports and recreation, but that figure "obviously doesn't include kids who see their family doctor or, as is typical, don't seek any medical help." As part of this event the AAFP committed to urging family physicians and medical students nationwide to understand the risks associated with each contact/collision sport and to encourage them to advise patients about their individual risks and benefits and how to manage and minimize any risks associated with their specific sport. The commitment is derived from AAFP policy on [Sports Medicine, Counseling About Risk of Contact/Collision Sports](#).

2. HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE MEASURES

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health approved two bipartisan bills related to prescription drug abuse on Wednesday, May 28. One bill would require the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to make timely scheduling decisions on the abuse potential in new drug products, and the other would help establish clear and consistent enforcement standards to protect the pharmaceutical supply chain.

The *Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act* (HR 4299), introduced by Health Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Joe Pitts (R-PA) and the senior Democratic member, Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), would amend the *Controlled Substances Act* to improve efficiency, transparency, and consistency of the DEA's process for scheduling new drugs approved by the

Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It would require the DEA to make a final determination 45 days after receiving FDA's scheduling recommendation for a new drug.

The *Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act* (HR 4709), sponsored by Reps. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Tom Marino (R-PA), Peter Welch (D-VT), and Judy Chu (D-CA), would improve enforcement efforts regarding prescription drug diversion and abuse. By allowing supply chain stakeholders to collaborate more effectively with law enforcement, the measure would establish a clear distinction between the legitimate pharmaceutical supply chain and the criminals who are diverting and selling drugs illegally.

3. COMMITTEE RETAINS FDA CIGAR OVERSIGHT IN AGRICULTURE SPENDING BILL

The AAFP joined the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and other organizations in signing a letter to House Appropriations Committee members opposing a potential amendment to the spending bill for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Related Agencies that would prohibit the FDA from regulating the marketing of cigars. The letter dated May 27, expressed strong opposition to any amendment that would exempt any type of cigar from regulation or would impede the current rulemaking process the FDA has initiated to determine the appropriate level of oversight for tobacco products not currently regulated by the agency.

The House Appropriations Committee met on Thursday, May 29 to debate the Agriculture spending bill and approved it on a vote of 31 to 18 without adopting any tobacco-related amendments. The full House is expected to consider the bill in early June.

4. HOUSE PASSES BILL TO INCREASE DRUG MONITORING & BACKGROUND CHECKS

The House approved the FY 2015 Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill (HR 4660) in a bipartisan vote of 321 to 87 early on Friday, May 30. The bill included \$8 million for the federal Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The House by voice vote adopted an amendment offered by Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ) which increased funding for the PDMP by \$8 million for a total of \$16 million in FY 2015.

The committee's statement on the bill "applauds the efforts of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to partner with other organizations to foster interstate interoperability and connectivity among state-run PDMPs, and encourages BJA to continue its support for efforts to establish a national network of interconnected PDMPs." It also directs BJA to prioritize grant funding for states which are engaged in initiatives to integrate PDMP data with electronic health systems, such as electronic health records and electronic prescribing systems." The AAFP urged that all states implement programs to monitor scheduled prescription drugs in a [position paper](#) on pain management and opioid abuse.

During floor consideration of the bill, the House adopted an amendment offered by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA) to increase funding for National Instant Criminal Background Checks System grants by \$19.5 million. The intent of the amendment is to provide resources for states to submit additional records of prohibited firearm purchasers. The amendment was adopted on a vote of 260 to 145.

5. FamMedPAC ACTIVE IN CALIFORNIA PRIMARY AND KANSAS THIS WEEK

FamMedPAC supported several California candidates this week, as well as the Representative from the congressional district of the AAFP national headquarters. The California primary is June 3, and the PAC Board decided to provide last-minute support to a first-time candidate and two current Congressional legislators. The PAC supported the following candidates this week:

- **Sen. Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA)**, a state senator, Mr. DeSaulnier is running for the open seat in the 11th Congressional district in California. The seat is considered a safe

Democratic seat and Mr. DeSaulnier is considered the front runner. Mr. DeSaulnier met with FamMedPAC staff and completed the [Candidate Questionnaire](#).

- **Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA)**, a member of the Health Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee, is a supporter of primary care GME reform.
- **Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA)** a first-year legislator, spoke at the FamMedPAC reception at last year's AAFP Assembly in San Diego.
- **Rep. Kevin Yoder (R-KS)**, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, represents Leawood, Kansas, the home of the AAFP headquarters. Rep. Yoder has visited the Leawood headquarters several times and met with senior staff.

6. AAFP NOMINATES DR. EPLING TO NATIONAL VACCINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On May 22, the AAFP sent the Department of Health and Human Services a letter recommending a candidate to fill one of the vacancies on the National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC). The AAFP recommended Dr. John W Epling, MD, MEd, FAAFP who is the Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Family Medicine at SUNY-Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY. He holds a joint faculty appointment in the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine. He completed the AAFP's Vaccine Science Fellowship in 2012 and currently serves on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice's Adult Vaccination Workgroup and the Task Force on Vaccine Inventory Management. NVAC's advisory role is to provide peer review, consultation, and recommendations on ways to encourage the availability of an adequate supply of safe and effective vaccination products as well as to recommend research priorities and other measures to enhance the safety and efficacy of vaccines.

7. REGULATORY BRIEFS

- On May 29, the Office of Inspector General within the Department of Health and Human Services released a report titled *Improper Payments for Evaluation and Management Services Cost Medicare Billions in 2010*.
- CMS will host several free educational calls, [registration](#) is required for each:
 - More ICD-10 Coding Basics, June 4, 1:30p ET.
 - Medicare Shared Savings Program ACO, June 10, 2:30p ET.
 - Open Payments (Sunshine Act), June 12, 1:30p ET.
 - PQRS: 2014 Qualified Clinical Data Registry, June 17, 1:30p ET.

8. GAO ANNOUNCES MEDPAC APPOINTMENTS, DESIGNATES VICE CHAIR

On May 29, Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States and head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), announced the appointment of three new members to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), as well as the reappointment of two existing members and the designation of the Commission's Vice Chair.

The newly appointed members are Kathy Buto, MPA; Francis "Jay" Crosson, MD, Group Vice President, American Medical Association in Chicago; and Warner Thomas, MBA, President and CEO of the Ochsner Health System in New Orleans. Their terms will expire in April 2017. The reappointed members, whose terms will also expire in April 2017, are Willis D. Gradison, Jr., MBA, former Scholar in Residence in the Health Sector Management Program at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, and William J. Hall, MD, Director of the Center for Healthy Aging at the University of Rochester School of Medicine.

Commissioner Jon B. Christianson, PhD, Professor in the Division of Health Policy and Management at the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis has been designated as Vice Chair of the Commission.