

receive funding based on the severity of the epidemic in their communities and the strength of their strategy to respond to it, if Congress agrees.

Subsequently, on June 16, the Senate voted 95 to 1 to negotiate with the House on the opioid legislation, in an effort to send a final bill to the president's desk before Congress recesses for the party conventions in mid-July. The Senate passed, 66 to 29, a motion offered by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) to insist that the *Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act* (S 524) include funding for prevention, treatment, and recovery associated with state and local efforts needed to combat the national heroin and opioid epidemic.

4. MENTAL HEALTH REFORM BILL TAKES A STEP FORWARD

On Wednesday, June 15, the House Energy and Commerce Committee approved the *Helping Families and Mental Health Act* (HR 2646) by a vote of 53-0. The legislation reforms current programs under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and includes policies to improve mental health care access, coordination, and best practices. The bill requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to issue guidance clarifying the current patient privacy protections.

The legislation would include the following highlighted policies that correspond with the AAFP's mental health policy recommendations:

- Allows for same-day billing for primary care and behavioral services;
- Makes primary care integration a required activity under the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant program;
- Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to issue new practice guidance; and
- Improves mental health parity enforcement.

The House of Representatives is expected to debate HR 2646 in September. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee approved its companion bill, the *Mental Health Reform Act of 2016* (S 2680), in March. It is unclear when the full Senate will bring this bill up for a vote.

5. HOUSE COMMITTEE REVIEWS FEDERAL ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE EFFORTS

On Tuesday, June 14, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Governmental Oversight and Investigations held a hearing on the public health responses to antibiotic resistance. The panel was organized in response to a report about a Pennsylvania [patient](#) who was infected with a high resistant strain of bacteria that has not been seen in the United States. Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA), the subcommittee chair, expressed concerns about the need for patient education necessary to curb expectations that may be associated with overprescribing. Rep. Gene Green (D-TX) mentioned research that is underway to help develop new antibiotics for rare infections, such as the one that was discovered recently.

6. FamMedPAC SUPPORTS SENATE CHALLENGER, TWO KEY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

FamMedPAC participated in Washington, DC fundraising events for three legislators this week, including a current member of the House running for the Senate in Arizona. The Arizona Academy of Family Physicians asked the PAC Board to consider supporting the candidate, and she completed the Candidate Questionnaire required for all open seat and challenger candidates. The PAC supported the following candidates this week:

- **Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ)**, who is running for the Senate. **Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV)**, the Senate Minority Leader, also attended the event.
- **Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)**, a member of the Health Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee.