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NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON...

- * The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health has announced a hearing for May 17 to focus on a recent proposed rule from CMS on its Part B Drug Payment Model.

1. SEVERAL BILLS ADDRESSING OPIOID ABUSE PASS IN THE HOUSE

On Tuesday, May 10, the House by voice vote passed three measures that attempt to address specific issues related to prescription drug abuse:

- *The Responsible Opioid Management and Incorporating Scientific Expertise Act* or the *Jason Simcakoski PROMISE Act* (HR 4063) would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DOD) to jointly update the VA/DOD Clinical Practice Guideline for Management of Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain.
- *The Good Samaritan Assessment Act* (HR 5048) would require a report about state and local Good Samaritan laws that exempt from criminal or civil liability anyone who administers an opioid overdose reversal drug or device or who contacts emergency services providers in response to an overdose.
- *The Opioid Program Evaluation (OPEN) Act* (HR 5052) directs the Attorney General and the Secretary of HHS to evaluate the effectiveness of grant programs for assistance in addressing opioid abuse.

The House on Wednesday, May 11, voted on several other measures concerning prescription opioid drug abuse. The first bill (HR 4641) would establish an inter-agency task force to review and update best practices for pain management and prescribing pain medication. The most contentious item was debated on Thursday, when the House considered the *Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Reduction Act* (HR 5046). It which authorizes \$103 million in grants each year for five years for opioid abuse prevention and treatment and the management of controlled substances. However, funding for these grants will have to be approved by the appropriations committee.