



## FEDERAL AFFAIRS LIAISON UPDATE

American Physical Therapy Association

### *Congressional Update*

**Affordable Care Act (Repeal and Replace):** APTA continues to track the AHCA and Senate conversations about repeal and replace legislation. Committee staff (Finance and HELP) are drafting a framework for what the Senate legislation could look like. Senate leadership have set the goal of having a bill and vote on the floor prior to August recess. APTA is continuing to express our concerns with changes to the Essential Health Benefits and to the Medicaid program. We sent a letter from Sharon Dunn last week to all Senate offices and also sent out an action alert to PTeam members, illustrating these concerns and leaving the door open to be a resource as the Senate works to craft their package. APPT members should be ready to advocate by watching all information coming from APTA.

**President's Budget:** President Trump released his budget blueprint and it included many items of concern. Specifically \$1.4 trillion in cuts to the Medicaid program over the next 10 years (\$800 billion attributed to eliminating Medicaid expansion as written in the AHCA), \$5.8 billion in cuts to NIH (\$300 million in cuts to National Institute of Child Health and Human Development that handles the majority of medical rehab research), and \$9.2 billion in cuts to Education. Although APTA understands this is simply a blueprint and many of these cuts won't make it through the appropriations process, they plan to express concerns as any of these cuts gain traction.

**ESSA and IDEA Update:** Congress has made no movement on these issues. Intermittent information continues through some social media outlets about HR 610. APTA is monitoring activity of the bill that calls for the elimination of ESEA and provides block grants to eligible states. APTA does not believe it will garner the support necessary to move forward, but continues to track. Congress has not introduced any legislation specific to IDEA, as the focus in both the House and the Senate continues to be on health care. APTA expects more movement on these issues in the second quarter.

The following links are excellent resources for those interested in gathering more information about bill details or tracking bills, votes, etc.:

[www.govtrack.us](http://www.govtrack.us)

[www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)

### **Summer Advocacy**

APPT members should push to get members of Congress to your practices for a visit or to schedule a meeting at their district offices while they are in-district for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July recess (July 1-10) and especially for the August recess (July 29-September 14). Here are a few suggestions for making sure you get on the schedule of your Senator or Representative:

- Make sure all requests for a meeting or practice visit are made four to six weeks in advance
- Please relay an agenda for your meeting or visit when you have a date and time scheduled so that the Member can be as prepared as possible

**Summer Advocacy (continued)**

- Feel free to send any pertinent documents or studies over in advance on whatever subject you are planning to speak with them about (APTA will be more than happy to get you information, if needed)
- If possible, schedule a meeting at their district office and, while there, ask to get a practice visit on the schedule – the more contacts the better

***Key Contacts***

If you are interested in becoming a key contact for federal affairs related to pediatrics in your state, please contact me at [mjones1@okcu.edu](mailto:mjones1@okcu.edu).