

To view this email as a web page, click [here](#).



CLIF NOTES

A message from the AHCA/NCAL President & CEO

Fighting For You and The Future of LTC

Medicaid Continues to Be Priority Focus

We are in an unprecedented time. There is so much happening every day. Ongoing changes, proposals, orders, and policies have the potential to impact member providers and residents –both positively and negatively – across the country. AHCA/NCAL is working hard on your behalf, so let's jump right into it.

MEDICAID

Over the past several weeks, Medicaid has been at the center of many conversations, spanning from Capitol Hill to the media and more locally. AHCA/NCAL recognizes the critical role of Medicaid, and we understand the threat of federal cuts to the program is a cause for deep concern. I want to share an update on how Medicaid fits into Congress' ongoing reconciliation process, what AHCA/NCAL is doing, and what you can do to help advocate for this vital program.

Where We Are Today

With Republicans in full control of the White House, Senate, and House, the GOP wants to advance their legislative priorities through what's called budget reconciliation. It's an expedited process for considering bills that are tied to taxes and spending that only requires a simple majority vote in the Senate versus the normal 60 votes. The House wants to do "one big, beautiful bill," while the Senate suggests splitting it into two parts.

In late February, the House approved a budget resolution or "blueprint" that called for significant tax cuts and spending reductions, including directing the House Energy and

Commerce committee (which oversees Medicaid) to come up with \$880 billion. The Senate passed its own budget resolution that was much slimmer and did not outline potential cuts to Medicaid.

The great news is that in both of these resolutions, repealing the federal staffing mandate for nursing homes would be included. This would save the government \$22 billion over 10 years. The discouraging news is that the House version signals potential cuts to Medicaid. There are very few ways for Energy and Commerce to cut spending without touching Medicaid.

The Reconciliation Process and Timing

Before any cuts to specific programs can even be proposed, both the House and Senate will need to come to an agreement on how to resolve the differences between their resolutions. Ultimately, they must adopt an identical approach to budget reconciliation. This process can be lengthy, as it requires ongoing negotiation between both Chambers on how to move forward.

Despite the daily deluge of headlines creating a sense of urgency, the reality is that we anticipate the reconciliation process to take place over at least the next couple of months, if not longer.

Additionally, Congress now needs to turn its attention to funding the government and avoiding a shutdown. They have until Friday, March 14. Fortunately, we are largely insulated from these sorts of budget negotiations. Medicare and Medicaid are mandatory health program payments that should continue for a period of time, even if there is a government shutdown. But we will keep you apprised of any important developments impacting long term care.

Defending Medicaid and Provider Taxes

We've been preparing for budget reconciliation since after the elections. For months, we've been talking to lawmakers about protecting Medicaid for our nation's seniors and individuals with disabilities. And based on those discussions, we feel confident we can win this.

AHCA/NCAL is moving quickly to take advantage of this time to have critical conversations with policymakers, state leaders, and members of Congress. Our focus is on Medicaid, and specifically, provider taxes. Some on the Hill are mistakenly trying to frame provider taxes as "fraud, waste, or abuse." It is our job to share the truth: *provider taxes are a legitimate tool that has been around for decades, and eliminating or reducing this source of funding is a cut to seniors on Medicaid – pure and simple.*

I don't have to tell you that Medicaid cuts would be devastating. Nearly two-thirds of all

nursing home residents, one in five assisted living residents, and virtually all ID/DD residents in ICFs rely on the program for their care. Nearly every state uses provider taxes, and more than 30 states have rates at least 5% or higher. We must and will defend Medicaid for our sector.

With a thin majority in both the House and Senate, we believe we can move the needle by being very targeted in our outreach. We are identifying key lawmakers to solidify support for our sector and evaluating earned and paid media options that may be able to lend a hand.

We Need Your Help

I recognize that these are anxious times, and frankly, this keeps me up at night. But it's also because my feet are tired from stomping around Capitol Hill all day! AHCA/NCAL is working relentlessly to bring this to an acceptable resolution.

There are things you can do, as well. Here's what we ask.

- 1. Work with your state affiliate to coordinate in-district meetings and facility tours.**

It is vital that you, the providers who care directly for those whose very lives depend on Medicaid, meet with your representatives to ensure they understand the situation. Invite them to visit your facility and show them why it is so important and what you do every day. Your state affiliate has resources to help you do just that, and an ideal time to do this is when members of Congress are back in your district for the upcoming March and April recesses. *It is important that we welcome all members of Congress to participate regardless of their party affiliation to see firsthand the quality services that you provide in their community.* That said, Republican policymakers are taking the lead on the reconciliation, and this is the time to remind them how important Medicaid is for seniors nationwide.

- 2. Come to Washington for AHCA/NCAL's [Congressional Briefing](#).** We have the opportunity to be together and meet with members of Congress **June 9-10, 2025**. This year's event will take place at the Capitol Hilton in D.C., which is a new location. Registration opens on Wednesday, March 19, so please make plans to attend. *We need every one of you there.*

I'm grateful that we've had many members visit D.C. over the past few months to meet with members of Congress – and more to come. Several of AHCA/NCAL's ID/DD providers will gather in Washington, D.C. later this month to visit Capitol Hill and talk about Medicaid. If you want more information or are interested in joining, please contact [Dana Ritchie](#).

Thanks to everyone for making the effort to be here at this critical time. It's so impactful.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES FROM CAPITOL HILL

Last week, AHCA/NCAL released our 2025 policy priorities for **“The Better Way.”** The goal of these priorities is to encourage the Administration and Congress to work with us to protect access to care and prepare for a growing elderly population. In addition to defending Medicaid from cuts, we want to strengthen our workforce, rationalize our regulatory system, and ensure Medicare Advantage is delivering on its promise. You can see the entire plan on our [website](#).

On the **staffing mandate** front, we continue to fight this through both legislative and legal action, and we have a strong path forward. As I mentioned, blocking the mandate is likely to be included in reconciliation. Our case before the Northern District of Texas is also still awaiting a ruling, and we anticipate that over the next couple of months. One way or another – we will prevail. And we’ll continue to keep you updated.

We also anticipate the release of the **FY 2026 SNF proposed payment rule**. For the past few years, the proposed rule has been released at the end of March. We are optimistic that we’ll see a normal increase in Medicare payments, but we are continuing to monitor discussions and engage with Administration officials. When it comes out, AHCA/NCAL will be ready and provide important, timely updates.

I also want to acknowledge the number of changes happening by the Trump Administration since taking office. Many members have been asking what the various personnel and policy changes mean for long term care. The short answer is that for a lot of this, we need to wait and see. Some actions are being challenged in court, others are still being interpreted, and others do not appear to have a direct impact on us. We are monitoring these developments and engaging with Administration officials at HHS and CMS. We’ll continue to offer clarity and guidance when we can as well as advance our policy solutions.

There’s certainly a lot happening right now, but you can rest assured that AHCA/NCAL is engaged. We are standing strong to advocate, to educate, and to fight – for you and your residents. Please be assured that we will continue to provide important updates on all issues.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We have several other upcoming events that present a great opportunity to come together with other providers and refresh ways to continue improving the care and services to those we serve.

If you haven't already done so, please make plans to attend this year's **Quality Summit, April 7-9** in Atlanta, Georgia. This is the leading event dedicated to advancing excellence in long term care and assisted living communities. Quality Summit is designed to equip you with innovative ideas, actionable strategies, and fresh perspectives to elevate the quality of care you provide for your residents. Quality remains a priority focus for AHCA/NCAL this year, and attending Quality Summit is the perfect way to continue on that journey with us. I'm also excited to share that we will celebrate our 2024 AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award recipients. You don't want to miss it. [Register today.](#)

Immediately following, AHCA/NCAL will host the one-of-its-kind **Population Health Management Summit, April 9-10** also in Atlanta. Population Health Management (PHM) is something that, whether you realize it or not, will impact you as a long term and post-acute care provider. No matter your experience with PHM, this summit offers something for newcomers to the seasoned providers. Registration is [now open](#).

THANK YOU AND STAY STRONG

I've said it many times, but that's only because it's true: AHCA/NCAL is here for you. We are here to support you. Together, we will remain strong. Thank you for everything you do, and let's forge ahead together to ensure residents get the high-quality care they need and deserve.



Clifton J. Porter, II
President & CEO, AHCA/NCAL

This message contains confidential information and is intended only for AHCA/NCAL membership. Dissemination, distribution or copying the contents of this email beyond this group is strictly prohibited.



[AHCA](#) | [NCAL](#) | [Provider](#)

© 2025 American Health Care Association. All rights reserved.

This email was sent by: **American Health Care Association**
122 C Street NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC, 20001, US