

I hope you are enjoying your summer. Legislators are out for August recess and a lot happened before they left. On the Federal level the Senate was not able to pass the Health Care Reform Act (HCFA), a “skinny repeal” of the ACA. The pared-down version was attempted after previous efforts to pass a more sweeping repeal of the law have failed. Republican Senators Susan Collins (ME), Lisa Murkowski (AK), and John McCain (AZ) joined all Democrats in voting no, while all other Republicans voted in favor. With the failure of this vote, congressional Republicans will no longer be able to use the budget reconciliation process to repeal provisions of the ACA until the next fiscal year and will instead have to move legislation under regular order that would require 60 votes for passage in the Senate. Until any legislation or regulations are formally enacted into law, the ACA remains the law of the land and all of its mandates, penalties, and enforcement remains in effect and your employer and individual clients should continue to follow all rules and regulations that are currently in place.

In Sacramento the focus has been on SB 562, the Single Payer bill. It was indefinitely suspended by Speaker Rendon in late July. He described it as “woefully incomplete” as it did not include a funding mechanism. Estimates range from \$330 to \$400 Billion for the first year. This did not go over well with some of its supporters and he and his family have received death threats. There is also an effort under way to remove him from office through a recall. This issue will not be going away soon as the primary supporter of the Single Payer movement, the California Nurses Association, is keeping the pressure on lawmakers. I am confident this will be resurrected in 2018 in the legislature and possibly as a ballot initiative. To keep up to date on this issue please visit www.CAHU.org/senate-bill-562 and attend events like the upcoming Health Care Retreat at Pala September 11-13th.

Lastly, SDAHU has been invited to a round table on health care at Senator Joel Anderson’s office on August 25th. There are a few spots left so if you are interested in participating please send me an email (Jim@MISbenefits.com) and I will send you the details.

If there is something you need on a legislative issue please let me know. Thank you.

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