

Appropriations and Budget Updates

- With the “laddered” continuing resolution (CR) in place, Congressional leaders must reach an agreement on top line spending levels before negotiations can begin on final bills.
- House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) told the Senate Republican caucus that he would push for a full year CR if there wasn't a spending agreement by February 2. As a reminder, the laddered CR extended funding for four appropriations bills through January 19 and the remaining eight bills, including the Defense and Labor-HHS bills through February 2.
- In the Senate, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) sent a [letter](#) to Senate Democrats laying out all the tasks the Senate needs to complete before the end of the year. Most notably, Leader Schumer noted the need to reach a funding deal on just four appropriations bills by January 19. As a reminder, a partial CR through September 30 triggers a 1% across the board sequestration under [H.R. 3746](#) the *Fiscal Responsibility Act* (FRA).
- The House Freedom Caucus [has softened](#) their demands to cap FY 2024 spending at \$1.47 trillion, with caucus Chairman Rep. Scott Perry (R-PA) saying they are likely to accept the \$1.59 trillion caps included in the FRA but with no rescissions or other emergency spending included in the [FRA side deal](#)

Hill Updates

- The House Energy and Commerce (E&C) Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee [held](#) a hearing on November 30 titled “Unmasking Challenges CDC Faces in Rebuilding Public Trust Amid Respiratory Illness Season.” The Subcommittee heard from CDC Director Mandy Cohen about the agency’s planned response for the 2023 respiratory disease season. Ahead of the hearing, E&C Republican leaders sent Cohen a [letter](#) demanding answers from CDC regarding a recent uptick in respiratory viruses in China.

Administration Updates

- The Biden-Harris Administration released the first ever [U.S. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health](#), building on to the administration’s work to advance health equity by acknowledging that social and economic factors play an important role in individuals’ health and wellbeing.
- President Joe Biden in coordination with HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra [announced](#) new efforts to bolster the domestic supply chain for essential medicines and medical countermeasures. The White House released a [fact sheet](#) summarizing new actions the administration will take including investing \$35 million in sterile injectable drug production and designating a Supply Chain Resilience and Shortage Coordinator to work on improving the resilience of supply chains and addressing product shortages.
- FDA Commissioner Robert Califf [announced](#) that Chief Scientist Namandjé Bumpus will replace Janet Woodcock as the agency’s Principal Deputy Commissioner when Woodcock retires next year.
- The FDA is [investigating](#) a potential link between six types of CAR-T (chimeric antigen receptor T-cell) immunotherapies and new blood cancer cases. Specifically, the FDA said it has received reports of T-cell malignancies, including CAR-positive

- lymphoma, in patients who received BCMA- or CD19-directed autologous CAR-T cell immunotherapies.
- The GAO [released](#) a report on end-stage renal disease (ESRD) and CMS' plans for including phosphate binders, oral drugs commonly used by Medicare beneficiaries with ESRD, in the bundled payment established for dialysis and ESRD treatment under Medicare.
 - The CDC unveiled a new wastewater data tracking dashboard to detect traces of infectious diseases at the local and national level. The [National Wastewater Surveillance System](#) program collects and displays wastewater data from communities across the U.S.

Health Policy Updates

- Two months after President Biden signed [H.R. 2544](#) the *Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Act (SECURE)* into law, the U.S. organ donation and transplant system is undergoing a significant modernization effort, attracting [interest](#) from a variety of tech companies, nonprofits, and research organizations (subscription required).

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