

Dec. 20, 2019: Advocacy spotlight on 2020 federal funding and extender package

Agreement reached on FY 2020 federal funding and extender package

Leaders in the House and Senate reached agreement on fiscal year (FY) 2020 spending bills before adjourning for the year on Dec. 20. Provisions of interest to AMA members include the following.

- The minimum age for purchase of tobacco products will be increased from 18 to 21.
- Gun violence research programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will receive \$25 million.
- Reauthorizes the Conrad-30 program for foreign physicians.
- Timing for reporting requirements related to clinical diagnostic laboratory tests will be delayed for one year (to Jan-March, 2021).
- Medicaid funding for US territories provided for 2020 and 2021.
- Repeals the 2.3% excise tax on medical devices, the sales tax on health insurance and the excise tax on employer-provided health insurance plans.
- Provides a process to allow biosimilar or generic drug developers to obtain samples of reference products for securing market approval.

Other popular health care "extender" programs have been funded through May 22, 2020:

- The current floor for the work geographic practice cost index (GPCI) of the Medicare physician fee schedule
- Support for quality measure endorsement, input and selection
- Community Mental Health Services demonstration program
- Delay of Medicaid disproportionate share reductions for hospitals.
- Impoverishment protections for spouses of Medicaid patients
- Health professional workforce programs, including the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) and the Health Career Opportunity Program (HCOP)
- Community Health Centers and the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program
- Temporary assistance for needy families and related programs

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