

**NACHC-Supported COVID-19 Legislation**  
**As of 6.24.20**

**H.R. 7187 – Helping Ensure Access to Local Telehealth (HEALTH) Act of 2020**

*Rep. G.T. Thompson (PA-15) and G.K. Butterfield (NC-01)*

This legislation would permanently allow Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics the ability to provide telehealth services in Medicare as “distant sites” and be paid equal to an otherwise in-person visit. The bill also removes the geographic restrictions related to originating sites.

Specifically, the bill:

- Makes the effective date for services rendered on or after the first day of the current emergency period, not upon the date of enactment;
- Provides for FQHC PPS/RHC AIR payment for distant site telehealth services;
- Makes permanent the waivers contained in the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020, relating to originating site rules (waivers which are otherwise in effect for the PHE period), for services where FQHCs/RHCs are the distant site provider; and
- Requires the Secretary to issue regulations to ensure that services are included as allowable costs within the FQHC/RHC cost-related methodologies and therefore qualify as billable “visits” under those methodologies.

**H.R 6792 /S. 3998 – Improving Telehealth for Underserved Communities Act**

*Rep. Adrian Smith (NE-03) and Rep. Tom O’Halleran (AZ-01)/ Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) and Sen. Angus King (I-ME)*

This legislation would allow health centers to provide, and bill for, telehealth services in Medicare as they would an in-person visit for the duration of the emergency.

Specifically, the bill:

- Allows FQHCs to bill for telehealth services in Medicare at the Medicare PPS rate for and for RHCs to bill at the AIR rate;
- Allows for this payment for the duration of the public health emergency; and
- Raises the RHC caps to account for payment changes made during pandemic.

**Strengthening America’s Healthcare Readiness (Introduced 6.24, no bill number yet)**

*Sens. Dick Durbin (IL) & Marco Rubio (R-FL)*

This legislation offers additional resources to expand the health care workforce for COVID-19 and post the pandemic by investing in the National Health Service Corps, Nurse Corps and the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS).

Specifically, the bill:

- Provides a one-time, supplemental appropriation of \$5 billion for scholarship and loan forgiveness awards through the National health Service Corps (NHSC) and \$1 billion through the Nurse Corps program.
- Establishes a demonstration pilot to allow NHSC members to serve in emergency capacities through the NDMS. Individuals serving in the NHSC or alumni who continue to practice in a health shortage area could concurrently serve in the NDMS and be available for rapid deployment for health emergencies, while receiving supplemental loan repayment awards to address their student debt.

## **H.R. 7026 - Rapid Testing for Communities Act**

*Rep. Diana DeGette (CO-01) & Rep. Larry Bucshon (IN-08)*

As communities begin to consider what the process of re-opening may look like, testing and contact-tracing plans become even more important. The funding and resources for rapid testing labs provided by this legislation would give primary care providers in underserved communities – including health centers – the opportunity to serve as testing hubs for their communities, therefore freeing up space in hospitals and expanding the capabilities of the local primary care workforce.

Specifically, the bill:

- Offers additional resources for primary care providers in underserved communities for on-site testing, including mobile labs, testing staff, and medical supplies and PPE for testing procedures.

## **Awaiting Introduction:**

### **Insular Area Medicaid Parity Act**

*Rep. Gregorio Sablan (MP-At Large)*

This legislation would remove the Medicaid caps which currently exist for U.S. territories. The removal of these caps would allow increased access to Medicaid services for those living in the territories, equal to the access granted to citizens of the 50 states.

### **Coronavirus Medicaid Response Act**

*Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)*

This legislation would create a system to automatically increase a state's Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to coincide with a rise in unemployment levels. As the economy improves, this bump would subside. This would allow an expansion of Medicaid coverage in times of economic crisis without mandating action from Congress at each occurrence.