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WEEK OF JANUARY 20, 2020

Welcome to America's Physician Groups' "Healthcare on the Hill," where you can get the latest on healthcare happenings in our nation's capital--and with a special focus on the value-based care movement. Here's what you will find in this week's edition:

- *Impeachment Is The Name of the Game*
- *Interoperability: We're Not so Sure*
- *Is That a Maybe?*
- *Register Today! APG Annual Conference 2020 in San Diego!*

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*Valinda Rutledge
Senior Vice President of Federal Affairs
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The One Game in Town

Washington remains in the throes of impeachment, with very little activity taking place otherwise.

Administration

Entitlements and the ACA

President Trump appeared to suggest in a television interview earlier this week that, due to deficit concerns, he is willing to consider cuts to certain entitlement benefits such as Medicare and Social Security. These remarks represent a departure from his presidential campaign stance in opposition of cuts to entitlement programs and come on the heels of the Supreme Court's refusal to fast-track *Texas v. Azar*, the well-known challenge to the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Both President Trump's remarks and the Supreme Court's decision will likely add another layer of intrigue to a 2020 presidential election in which many voters say healthcare is the issue that's most important to them.

Interoperability

As background, HHS's Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) issued a proposed interoperability and information-blocking rule in early 2019 which defined the requirements of healthcare providers and electronic health record (EHR) vendors for data-sharing. The rule, which is currently being reviewed by ONC and the White House Office of Management and Budget, would require companies to make their health records software more interoperable and allow providers to share patient data with outside organizations. The rule would also give patients free and direct access to their medical data via third-party smartphone applications.

Some stakeholders have expressed concerns that the proposed rule would increase healthcare costs and includes an unreasonable implementation timeframe. There have also been requests for an increased focus on education and corrective action during the initial enforcement of the rule's data-blocking provision.

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