

## Emlyn Struthers

---

**From:** TRP Tip Sheet  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 8, 2026 7:53 AM  
**To:** Emlyn Struthers  
**Subject:** Congress Returns Next Week

### This Message Is From an External Sender

This email originated from outside of Contra Costa County. Please do not click links or open attachments unless you are expecting this email.

[Report Suspicious](#)

THORN RUN PARTNERS



## The TRP Tip Sheet

April 8, 2026

*Editor's note: The next edition of 'The TRP Tip Sheet' will publish on Monday, April 13.*

### QUICK TAKES

- **CONGRESS RETURNS NEXT WEEK.** Lawmakers will return for a three-week legislative session to tackle a number of priorities.
- **FULLER WINS GA-14 SPECIAL ELECTION.** Voters in northwest Georgia chose Republican Clayton Fuller to fill the House seat vacated by former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) in a special election held yesterday.
- **TRP CONGRESSIONAL RETIREMENT TRACKER.** Click [here](#) to view TRP's retirement tracker.
- **PROPOSED NIH BUDGET CUTS GET BLASTED BY LAWMAKERS, RESEARCHERS.** Some top lawmakers and research and patient advocacy groups are frustrated with President Trump's request to cut back the NIH's budget by \$5 billion.

### CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

- **CONGRESS RETURNS NEXT WEEK.** Senators will return for legislative business on Monday, followed by House lawmakers on Tuesday, amid a number of overlapping developments that will soak up much of the oxygen during Congress's three-week sprint before the next scheduled recess. Here's a look at what we're tracking:

- **DHS funding.** Last week, amid the shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that has persisted since Feb. 14, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) and Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) reached a [deal](#) to fund the agency. Under the plan, both chambers would: (1) pass legislation ([text](#)) to fund DHS for the remainder of FY 2026, with the exception of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP); and (2) later fund those two agencies through a Republican-only budget reconciliation bill due to Democratic opposition. The Senate passed the first prong of this framework during a "pro forma" session last week. However, despite having President Trump's blessing, opposition to the deal has grown among House Republicans, largely due to the omission of ICE and CBP funding in the initial phase. To that end, the House Freedom Caucus has [called for](#) using reconciliation to fund the entirety of the department — not just ICE and CBP — for the remainder of President Donald Trump's term. We'll be watching how the House votes on the Senate-passed DHS funding bill as part of the first part of the GOP leadership's deal, and what impact that vote may have on reconciliation 2.0.
- **FY 2027 appropriations.** Members of the House Appropriations Committee (HAC) are set to begin their work of marking up the twelve appropriations bill that will fund the government in fiscal year (FY) 2027. The latest intel indicates this process will begin with subcommittee markups of the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs (MilCon-VA) and Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) bills next week. Of note, White House Budget Director Russell Vought is also expected to testify before the House and Senate Budget Committees as to the President's Budget Request ([PBR](#)) published on Friday. The PBR, as well as agency-level requests, will likely be used as the basis for building out the spending bills in the coming weeks, with appropriators deciding funding levels ahead of the fiscal year that begins on Oct. 1.
- **FISA reauthorization.** In light of the upcoming expiration of the "spy powers" statute known as the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), President Trump has pushed for an 18-month extension of the law that gives intelligence agencies the authority to surveil foreign intelligence targets located outside of the U.S. for limited national security purposes. Some House conservatives have opposed a "clean" FISA reauthorization on the grounds that the warrantless wiretapping of foreign nationals authorized by section 702 of the law may incidentally lead to interception of communications made by U.S. citizens. House leadership plans to put the 18-month FISA extension ([H.R. 8035](#)) up for a vote next week, which may need Democratic votes to pass due to expected Republican defections.
- **Iran war powers.** Following a number of ultimatums issued by President Trump that suggested further attacks on Iran, renewed efforts to rein in the president's legal authority to continue engaging have emerged among Democrats. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) has [indicated](#) he would pursue forcing another "war powers" resolution to restrict the president from engaging in hostilities not explicitly authorized by Congress, though these efforts would likely require support from a handful of Republicans by way of a "discharge petition."

— **FULLER WINS GA-14 SPECIAL ELECTION.** Yesterday, voters in Georgia's 14th congressional district went to the polls to fill the House seat vacated by former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA), who resigned in January. Republican Clayton Fuller, a local district attorney, defeated Democrat Shawn Harris in the closer-than-expected race, expanding the Republican majority in the House to 219-214.

## WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

### NEW TODAY...

— **CMS ISSUES MEDICARE PAYMENT RULES, RATES: THE LATEST.** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has finalized or proposed a number of Medicare rules and rate announcements. Highlights include:

- CMS issued a [final rule \(fact sheet\)](#) outlining policy and technical changes to the Medicare Advantage (MA) and Part D payment policies for Contract Year 2027. It outlines a wide range of finalized changes, including revisions to the Star Ratings system and enrollment processes, as well as the codification of Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) policies. Click [here](#) to read TRP's summary of the rule.
- CMS finalized its [rate announcement \(fact sheet\)](#) of methodological changes for Calendar Year 2027 MA Capitation Rates and Part C and Part D Payment Policies. The Rate Announcement finalizes an average net increase of 2.48 percent, or \$13 billion, in federal payments to MA plans in 2027. Click [here](#) to read TRP's summary of the announcement.
- CMS [proposed \(fact sheet\)](#) its annual update to FY 2027 Medicare payment policies and rates for skilled nursing facilities (SNF). Under the proposed rule, overall payments to SNFs would be increased by an estimated 2.4 percent in FY 2027, resulting in an estimated \$888 million payment increase. Click [here](#) to read TRP's summary of the proposed rule.

— **TREASURY ISSUES OPPORTUNITY ZONE NOMINATION GUIDANCE.** The Treasury Department issued [guidance](#) to state governments on the process for census tracts to be designated as Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ). Nominations are due to Treasury by Oct. 1, 2026.

— **DOE RELEASES CRITICAL MINERALS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY.** The Department of Energy (DOE) issued a notice of funding opportunity ([NOFO](#)) for up to \$69 million of funding to support investments in critical minerals processing technology.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS...

— **TRP RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION FUND STATE ROADMAP: KEY UPDATES.** To help clients navigate the One Big Beautiful Bill Act's (OBBBA) Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF), TRP provides a state-by-state "roadmap" that translates each application into a standardized profile of proposed initiatives, priority activity areas, use-of-funds categories, and (now) FY 2026 award amounts. TRP's [RHTF State Roadmap](#), recently updated with new details from 18 states, is designed to remain a live resource and will be updated as states finalize budgets, negotiate implementation details with CMS, and begin issuing funding and procurement opportunities tied to RHTF initiatives.

— **TRP SPECIAL REPORT: A LOOK AT THE 2026 MIDTERM ELECTIONS.** TRP's first [special report](#) on the 2026 midterm elections includes slides that cover: (1) statistical context for recent midterm elections; (2) 2026 midterm election electorate issues; (3) the 2026 primary calendar for all 50 states; (4) context on mid-decade redistricting; (5) retirements in the House & Senate, including a look who's coming off of key committees in the House; (6) 2026 House and Senate ratings via the Cook Political Report; and more.

— **WHITE HOUSE ISSUES SECTION 232 TARIFF ORDERS.** The Trump administration issued two sweeping tariff-related orders under section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 following Commerce Department investigations. Of note:

- The president issued a [proclamation \(fact sheet\)](#) imposing new *ad valorem* tariffs on patented pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical ingredients of 100 percent, with various exemptions. Click [here](#) to read TRP's summary of the order.
- Another [order \(fact sheet\)](#) provides clarity on the framework used to calculate the tariffs applicable to steel, aluminum, and copper products. Products made entirely of these products will be subject to a 50 percent *ad valorem* levy, while products made of 15 percent or less of these products will no longer be subject to tariffs.

— **TRP UPDATE: STATUS OF THE 21ST CENTURY ROAD TO HOUSING ACT.** The latest version of a sweeping bipartisan housing package passed the Senate with broad support on March 12, but faces an uphill battle in the House. Click [here](#) to read TRP's update on the legislation.

— **TRP MEMO: THE LATEST ON H-1B VISA REFORM.** The Department of Labor (DOL) issued a [proposed rule](#) amending its methodology for calculating prevailing wage rates for H-1B and other foreign workers. TRP's [tracking memo](#) of the Trump administration's broader actions on H-1B visa reform has been updated to reflect these and other recent developments.

— **TRUMP ISSUES ORDER ON MAIL-IN VOTING.** The White House issued an executive order ([EO](#)) aimed at overhauling vote-by-mail (VBM) procedures by requiring states to opt-in to VBM through the U.S. Postal Service and mandating that VBM ballots only be sent to individuals verified as eligible citizens by DHS.

— **DOT NOTICES LATEST ROUND OF 'SAFE STREETS' FUNDING.** The Department of Transportation (DOT) issued a [NOFO](#) for nearly \$1 billion of available FY 2026 grant funding under the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) program. Grant applications are due on May 26, 2026.

## WHAT WE'RE READING

### **[Bloomberg: Proposed NIH Budget Cuts Get Blasted by Lawmakers, Researchers \(\\$\)](#)**

Some top lawmakers and research and patient advocacy groups are frustrated with President Donald Trump's request to cut back the National Institutes of Health's budget by \$5 billion. "The request has several shortcomings," Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee chair, said in a statement released shortly after the administration's budget release Friday. "For example, the proposal includes unwarranted funding cuts in biomedical research." Biomedical research funding has proved to be surprisingly durable even as the administration searches for reductions in government spending, suggesting it has cachet among Republicans even as they decry waste and fraud. The Trump administration pitched a \$18 billion reduction for fiscal year 2026—which would have slashed the agency's budget by about 40%.

### **[Roll Call: 'Nobody answers': The unraveling of a patient care research agency](#)**

A small federal agency responsible for studying how health care works for patients is largely dormant despite receiving millions of dollars from Congress for research into antibiotic resistance, health care access and safety or quality of care. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has spent none of the \$345 million appropriated by Congress for the current fiscal year, and \$80 million of its fiscal 2025 funding was sent back to the Treasury. AHRQ hasn't funded any new research projects in almost a year, and it hasn't issued grant funding for existing projects since before the end of the previous fiscal year in September, according to multiple people familiar with the matter. That has left the

agency, created in 1999 to fund research into how health care delivery can be safer and better for patients, in limbo as the Trump administration signals its desire to reduce its funding or transfer its functions elsewhere.

### **STAT: FDA backs proposals to entice pharma companies to test, make drugs domestically (\$)**

The Food and Drug Administration used the president's budget to propose policies aimed at encouraging domestic development and manufacturing of drugs. FDA Commissioner Marty Makary has said the agency needs "giant, big ideas" to counter China's dominance in early-stage clinical development of drugs. Among the FDA's ideas are proposals to make it easier to run early-stage trials in the U.S. and to hand an advantage to U.S.-based generics manufacturers. The Trump administration has been using a variety of policy levers to try and bring drug manufacturing to the U.S. For example, many of the brand drugmakers that struck deals to lower U.S. prices also promised to increase domestic manufacturing, under the threat of tariffs.

### **Fierce Healthcare: Judge vacates HRSA's restriction on 340B hospital 'replenishment models'**

A federal judge has, at least temporarily, nixed a longstanding restriction on whether some 340B hospitals could use group purchasing organizations to make initial purchases of covered outpatient drugs. The decision, handed down March 31 in a case brought by provider supply chain and purchaser Premier, centers on a 2013 policy of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which oversees the drug discount program. That policy built on a statutory participation requirement for disproportionate share hospitals that bars them from obtaining "covered outpatient drugs through a group purchasing organization [GPO] or other group purchasing arrangement."

### **Inside Health Policy: FDA Asks For Permanent Authorization Of Pediatric Rare Disease Voucher (\$)**

FDA is asking Congress to permanently reauthorize the pediatric rare disease priority review voucher (PRV) program, hoping to avoid a reauthorization cycle every four years that led to the program's expiration in 2024 before it was later renewed. In its fiscal 2027 budget justification, FDA says permanent reauthorization of the program would create "more predictability for sponsors and ensuring children living with debilitating or life-threatening conditions have access to safe and effective therapies." Currently, the voucher program is set to expire again in 2029. After a temporary expiration amid Congress' struggles to authorize a budget for fiscal 2026, it was reauthorized in January.

### **Inside Health Policy: FDA Seeks More Authority Over DTC Ads Amid Compounding Crackdown (\$)**

FDA is seeking more authority from Congress to crack down on direct-to-consumer advertising of drugs including compounded products -- a move signaling the agency believes it needs stronger legal grounding after recently warning a slew of telehealth companies not to compare compounded drugs to FDA-approved formulations and targeting Superbowl ads. Prior administrations said the agency lacked authority to target telehealth advertising, and lawmakers have been asking FDA if it needs help from Congress. At the same time, however, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is touting the efficacy of peptide products offered by compounders and promising laxer FDA enforcement for those products.

### **Inside Health Policy: Ed & Workforce Dems Warn Lack Of Oversight, Transparency Enable Rise In Insurer Claim Denials (\$)**

A lack of federal oversight and limited data transparency are allowing insurers to increasingly deny coverage for necessary and oftentimes lifesaving care with little consequence, according to a new report from House Education & the Workforce Democrats, which argues policymakers must strengthen enforcement, improve data collection and expand consumer protections to rein in the practice. According to the report, released early Wednesday (April 8), even as workers and their families continue to pay more each year in health care costs, insurers are increasingly rejecting coverage for care they are expected to pay for. “These improper claim denials can have catastrophic effects on working people’s lives and livelihoods,” the report states. “A wrongful rejection can force consumers to make impossible choices, such as deciding whether to wipe out their savings or skip a critical surgery.”

### **Fierce Healthcare: CMS unveils new Medicare pilot for hemp, CBD products**

The Trump administration has announced a new initiative that would allow participants in certain alternative payment models to offer hemp-based products to patients when it aligns with clinical guidance. The new Substance Access Beneficiary Engagement Incentive (BEI) was unveiled on April 1 by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The agency said it would be available to providers participating in the ACO REACH model as well as the Enhancing Oncology Model, and will be allowed under the eventual Long-Term Enhanced ACO Design (LEAD) Model beginning next year. CMS said in the announcement that participating organizations approved under the BEI can offer hemp-derived products valued at up to \$500 per beneficiary per year within the model's guidelines and safeguards, and subject to clinical guidance.

### **The Hill: RFK Jr. moves to broaden CDC vaccine panel eligibility after federal judge found new members unqualified**

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s amended charter for a vaccine advisory committee was published Monday and is set to go into effect soon, but there are currently no members after a federal judge effectively nullified those handpicked by the secretary. On April 6, Kennedy’s amended charter for the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was published in the Federal Register. Kennedy’s charter renewal broadens the criteria for membership to the committee. The previous charter, which expired Wednesday, specified that members are to have “expertise in the use of vaccines and other immunobiologic agents in clinical practice or preventive medicine, have expertise with clinical or laboratory vaccine research, or have expertise in assessment of vaccine efficacy and safety.”

Thorn Run Partners | [www.thornrun.com](http://www.thornrun.com)



Thorn Run Partners | 100 M St. SE STE 750 | Washington, DC 20003 US

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)