



To: WSW Clients
FROM: WSW Team
DATE: January 24, 2017

On January 24, 2017, Dr. Tom Price appeared before the Senate Finance Committee for his confirmation hearing to serve as the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The Finance Committee will vote on Dr. Price's nomination, but a date has not yet been set.

HIGHLIGHTS/KEY POINTS:

Members focused largely on the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicare and Medicaid. Many senators expressed concerns about privatizing Medicare and turning Medicaid into a block grant. Several senators also asked Dr. Price to guarantee that various ACA protections would be included in future reform. Dr. Price committed to working with the House and Senate on these issues, but generally shied away from making guarantees. While there was less focus on Dr. Price's stock trades than in the HELP Committee hearing, several senators questioned him on potential financial impropriety.

NOMINEE INFORMATION & LINK TO TESTIMONY

[Senator Orrin Hatch Opening Statement](#)

[Senator Ron Wyden Opening Statement](#)

[Dr. Price's testimony](#)

MEMBER INTERESTS

- Senator Hatch – potential conflicts of interest, commitment to communicate with Committee, priorities/vision for running HHS, concerns with CMMI, Medicare waste, fraud and abuse
- Senator Wyden – health care stocks, ACA executive order, potential loss of coverage
- Senator Roberts – tools to provide stability to insurance markets, critical access hospital 96-hour rule, EHRs/meaningful use, reduce regulations
- Senator Nelson – privatizing Medicare, coverage for patients with pre-existing conditions
- Senator Menendez – immigrants causing leprosy in the US, relationship between HIV and AIDS, vaccines and autism, value of Medicaid/issues with block grants
- Senator Carper – ACA replacement, ensuring safety net
- Senator Burr – asset disclosure, goals of ACA replacement

- Senator Cardin – global gag rule executive order, global health efforts, tobacco & e-cigarette regulation, ACA replacement – preventative care, mental health, pediatric dental
- Senator Isakson – CMS joint replacement program, CMMI Part B demonstration, protection of Medicare Advantage
- Senator Brown – potential loss of coverage with ACA repeal, ACA replacement - protect individuals with pre-existing conditions, preventative care, ban on out of pocket maximums, contraceptive coverage; CHIP funding extension
- Senator Portman – ensure adequate time for ACA replacement, ensure patient access, CARA implementation – SAMHSA grants, IMD exclusion, 3 day stay rule, Medicaid waiver
- Senator Bennet – concerns with catastrophic coverage, state flexibility, importance of federal funding in Medicaid, repeal of Medicaid expansion
- Senator Toomey - options for ensuring coverage other than individual mandate, transparency in pricing and healthcare outcomes, NIH Alzheimer’s research
- Senator Thune – designate person within HHS on Indian Health Service reform, delay/non-enforcement of CMS rule requiring all outpatient therapeutic services to be provided under direct supervision for critical access/rural hospitals, state flexibility in ACA replacement
- Senator Casey – potential for cuts to CHIP and Medicaid
- Senator Heller – repeal of Cadillac tax, cost of ACA, Medicaid
- Senator Warner – CMS benefit for end of life care planning, Trump ACA executive order, CMMI
- Senator Scott – SC Nurse-Family Partnership through Medicaid – infant and maternal health, coverage vs. access, coordination between education and healthcare systems for children, employer-sponsored
- Senator McCaskill – ACA repeal, Medicare reform, turning Medicaid into a block grant
- Senator Cassidy – nuances of Medicaid block grants
- Senator Grassley – Physician Payment Sunshine Act, vaccine safety
- Senator Stabenow – protections for patients with pre-existing conditions, high risk pools, maternity coverage, mental health coverage, concerns with privatizing Medicare

- Senator Cantwell – factors that contribute to the cost of Medicaid, community-based vs. nursing home care
- Senator Wyden #2 – Medicare negotiation on drug pricing, Planned Parenthood, timeline of ACA repeal and replace
- Senator Cardin #2 – minority health disparities, qualified health centers, concern about potential Medicaid cuts and effect on minority community
- Senator Nelson #2 – Puerto Rico, Medicare Part D donut hole
- Senator Menendez #2 – concerns about privatizing Medicare
- Senator Brown #2 – Medicare eligibility age, community health workers, guaranteed healthcare for veterans
- Senator Casey #2 – coverage for individuals with disabilities through Medicaid, concerns with Medicaid block grants
- Senator McCaskill #2 – Medicaid block grants, social services block grant

PRESS COVERAGE

<http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/tom-price-confirmation-hearing-health-human-services-234094>

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/24/politics/tom-price-nomination-hearing-finance/>

<https://www.statnews.com/2017/01/24/tom-price-hhs-senate-finance/>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2017/01/price-access/514262/>