

Hill Updates by: Yvette M. Salas MSN, CRRN

- On Thursday, June 1, the Senate [voted](#) 63-36 to send the Fiscal Responsibility Act to President Biden's desk for signature before the debt ceiling X-date of June 5. The bill [was passed](#) by an overwhelming bipartisan majority (314-117) in the House on Wednesday, after advancing out of the House Rules Committee by one vote on Tuesday (The New York Times).

The bill [cuts](#) non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending to \$704 billion while allowing defense spending to rise about 3% to \$868 billion (PBS Newshour). However, the White House has a handshake agreement on a number of side deals. One side deal is that veterans health spending will be held at \$121 billion, which cuts the rest of the NDD line to \$583 billion. Another side deal transitions money from authorized IRS spending in last year's Inflation Reduction Act, as well as COVID-19 funding recissions, to the NDD budget for FY24. The White House claims the side agreements will bring the non-veterans NDD spending up to \$637 billion. That would mean only a \$1 billion cut from FY23.

The bill also incentivizes Congress to pass all twelve appropriations bills by January 1 or an automatic 1% cut occurs across all NDD and Defense spending. It's worth noting that the Fiscal Year ends on September 30th, so Congress can pass a continuing resolution to get to January 1 if necessary without cuts. Finally, the bill caps FY25 spending at a 1% increase from FY24 across the board while also setting future caps to FY29 that do not have any enforcement mechanisms.

As part of Senate passage, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) released a [joint statement](#) acknowledging that FY24 appropriations work was only beginning and that bipartisanship would be necessary to avoid the automatic sequestration January 1.

The deal was negotiated between the White House and Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and his team, with little input from House or Senate Democrats. However, they voted in support of the deal. You can read a Roll Call primer [here](#). You can see the bill [here](#).

- On Tuesday, May 30, the House Energy & Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Health Subcommittee Chair Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Oversight Subcommittee Chair Morgan Griffith (R-VA) [sent a letter](#) to HHS requesting NIH researcher Dr. Bernard Moss sit for a videotaped interview investigating whether the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases pursued gain of function research proposed by Dr. Moss on pox viruses.

Administration Updates

- On Tuesday, May 30, the FDA released the [Patient Medication Information](#) guide as part of their Medication Guide series. It addresses prescription drugs and

certain biological products (both brand name and generic) used, dispensed, or administered on an outpatient basis, as well as for blood and blood components transfused in an outpatient setting.

- On Thursday, June 1, CMS released a [clinical registry](#) prescribing physicians must use to ensure Medicare coverage once the FDA gives traditional approval to Alzheimer's drugs Aduhelm and Leqembi, which are currently approved under accelerated approval. The goal of the registry is to collect information to further examine the effectiveness of these drugs once in wider use.

Health Policy Updates

- On Tuesday, May 30, KFF released a brief [analysis](#) of the impact of Medicaid unwinding on postpartum individuals. They found that postpartum individuals in non-expansion states such as Texas are most likely to be impacted by the unwinding and lose health coverage due to being disenrolled after 60 days of coverage. Additionally, KFF Health News [reported](#) on Thursday, June 1 that more than 600,000 people have lost Medicaid coverage since the unwinding, with the vast majority due to failure to complete paperwork.