



Preparing to Engage with Legislators and Policy Makers

Policy Committee Chairs:

Dr. Scott Daniels

Hawai'i State Office of Rural Health

Dr. John Packham

Nevada State Office of Rural Health

National Organization of **State Offices of Rural Health**

DC Update



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Congressional Landscape

- Divided Congress
 - **House:** GOP has five seat majority in the House, same margin as Dems in 117th Congress.
 - **Senate:** Dems have 51-49 majority.
 - **White House:** Will Biden run for second term?
- What does that mean? Formula for bills that move this Congress:
 - bipartisan
 - non-controversial
 - not a budget buster: Increased funding in non-appropriation related bills will be tough sledding.

Important Dates for 2023

- **February 7:** President Biden State of the Union Address to Congress
- **March 11:** Biden Administration Budget for FY 2024 released
- **Late March to Mid April:** Deadline to submit requests for Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bill generally range between March 13-April 14.
 - Programmatic funding increase for SORH is major priority.
- Spring-Summer: Prime legislative window
- **September 30:** End of FY 2023
- **November 16, 2023:** National Rural Health Day

Rural Health Related Committees

- House
 - Energy and Commerce: McMorris Rodgers (R-WA)-Pallone (D-NJ)
 - Appropriations
 - Ways and Means: Jason Smith (R-MO)-Neal (MA)
- Senate
 - Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP): Sanders (D-VT)-Cassidy (R-LA)
 - Finance: Wyden (D-OR) - Crapo (R-ID)
 - Appropriations: Murray (D-WA) - Collins (R-ME)

Public Health Emergency is Over

- Republicans first health care priority for 118th Congress – ending PHE
- White House announced that COVID-19 PHE and the associated national emergency declaration will both end on May 11, 2023
- This includes all of the waivers that have not already been extended by Congress (e.g., telehealth and Hospital at Home).

NOSORH Specific Legislation

- **SORH** Reauthorization Bill Signed into law
 - On January 5, 2023 Biden signed into law the State Offices of Rural Health Reauthorization Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-356)
 - Bill reauthorized the SORH program at a baseline of \$12.5 million annually for Fiscal Years 2023-2027
 - Emphasis for House and Senate Appropriations Committees
- **FLEX** Reauthorization Act: H.R. 6400 in the 117th Congress, SAVE Rural Hospitals Act by Reps. Graves (R-MO), Huffman (D-CA)
 - Sect 401 of H.R. 6400 reauthorizes the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grants. NOSORH encourages strong support for this provision.
 - Emphasis for Ways & Means/Senate Finance
 - Looking for stand-alone bill being introduced this Congress

101 on Meeting with a Member

- Member Profile
 - Members love stories
 - Schedules often go by the 15 minutes
- Make the local connection
- Support your ask by talking about impact to constituents
- Get a staff contact
- Members have seen everything
- Don't worry about knowing every answer

101 on Meeting with a Staffer

- Staffer Profile
 - They are YOUNG!
 - Cover a range of issues beyond health care and rural health
- Staffers are narrowly focused on the impact of health programs to their district and state.
- Don't be a slave to the “one pager”
- Make the ask
- **But, MOST IMPORTANT, make the connection!**

The Ask

- **Increase SORH funding in FY 2024 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill[s] to \$18 million.**
 - SORH Reauthorization Act of 2022 set baseline authorization level.
 - Programmatic funding Increase would enable each SORH to hire additional FTE
- **Introduce stand-alone legislation** reauthorizing Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility grant program.
 - Sect 401 of H.R. 6400 in 117th Congress sought to reauthorize FLEX. NOSORH encourages strong support for this provision.
 - Emphasis for Ways & Means Cmt members
 - Looking for stand-alone House and Senate bill

After the Meeting, Follow Up

- Important to stay on the radar after meeting with member or staff
- Send Thank You notes
- Send periodic emails



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Andrew Coats
acoats@hallrender.com

Hall, Render, Killian, Heath & Lyman, P.C. | 1425 K Street N.W., Suite 650 | Washington, D.C. 20005

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