

Innovation and Health IT White Hot in 114th Congress

On September 8, the US Congress will return from their August recess. There are many high profile and critical issues for the Senators and Representatives to consider as they round out the year. Foreign policy decisions and averting another government shutdown are currently stealing the headlines, but healthcare is due to have a banner year as well. During 2015, there have been 734 different bills and resolutions introduced before Congress. This overview examines proposed legislation relating to healthcare IT that has been reported in the House or Senate and bills awaiting Presidential signature or veto.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES- 114TH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

[21st Century Cures Act H.R. 6 of 2015:](#)

- Synopsis: 21st Century Cures is a rare bipartisan bill that reforms current standards and appropriations for biomedical research. It provides \$1.75 billion annually for NIH and \$110 million for the FDA. This funding would lapse after five years. The funding will be raised through budget offsets. Along with the funding increases, the bill reduces regulations on medical research and expedites testing processes for new pharmaceutical drugs. The bill enjoys broad bipartisan support and extensive support outside of Congress as well.
- Sponsor: Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI-6)
- Originating Committee: House Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Date of Introduction: 19 May 2015
- Status: Passed full House on 10 July 2015, 344 Yea- 77 Nay. Sent to Senate, referred to Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.
- Chance of being enacted: 53% according to govtrack.us.

[To repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and for other purposes. - HR 596](#)

- Synopsis: This bill would repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010. The bill requires the committees of the House to begin the process of proposing alternative reforms. There have been many previous attempts, reports of up to 54 attempts, by the US Congress. None have succeeded.
- Sponsor: Rep. Bradley Byrne (R-AL-1)
- Originating Committee: House - Energy and Commerce; Education and the Workforce; Ways and Means; Judiciary; Natural Resources; Rules; House Administration; Appropriations; Budget
- Date of Introduction: 28 January 2015
- Status: Passed the House on 3 February 2015. 239 Yea- 186 Nay.
- Chance of being enacted: 70% according to govtrack.us.



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[H.R.1725 - National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Reauthorization Act of 2015](#)

- Synopsis: Amends the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005 to include as a purpose of state-administered controlled substance monitoring systems ensuring access to prescription history information for the investigative purposes of appropriate law enforcement, regulatory, and state professional licensing authorities.
- Sponsor: Rep. Ed Whitfield (R-KY-1)
- Originating Committee: House Energy and Commerce Committee
- Date of Introduction: 26 March 2015
- Status: Reported by Committee, sent to full House- 29 July 2015
- Chance of being enacted: 44% according to govtrack.us.

UNITED STATES SENATE- 114TH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

[S.192 - Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015](#)

- Synopsis: This bill is a reauthorization of the Older Americans Act of 1965. The OAA has not been reauthorized since 2011. Authorizes appropriations for support services for FY '16-'18. It empowers government officials with new authorities to assist the elderly.
- Sponsor: Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)
- Originating Committee: Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
- Date of Introduction: 20 January 2015
- Status: Passed Senate on 16 July 2015 by voice vote. Referred to House Education and the Workforce Committee.
- Chance of being enacted: 66% according to govtrack.us.

[S. 1347: Electronic Health Fairness Act of 2015](#)

- Synopsis: This bill amends title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act to prohibit, for a payment year after 2015, any patient encounter of an eligible professional occurring at an ambulatory surgical center from being treated as such an encounter in determining whether an eligible professional qualifies as a meaningful electronic health record (EHR) user. Terminates this prohibition three years after the Department of Health and Human Services determines, through notice and comment rulemaking, that certified EHR technology is applicable to the ambulatory surgical center setting.
- Sponsor: Sen. John Isakson (R-GA)
- Originating Committee: Senate Finance Committee
- Date of Introduction: 14 May 2015
- Status: Passed Senate
- Chance of being enacted: 38% according to govtrack.us.



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[S. 1253: Patient Access to Disposable Medical Technology Act of 2015](#)

- Synopsis: This bill amends title XVIII (Medicare) of the Social Security Act to cover substitute disposable medical technology as durable medical equipment, subject it to a special payment rule, and exempt it from competitive acquisition.
- Sponsor: Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC)
- Originating Committee: Senate Finance Committee
- Date of Introduction: 7 May 2015
- Status: Reported by Committee- 30 July 2015
- Chance of being enacted: 46% according to govtrack.us.

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<https://www.ehdc.org/workgroups/6-policy-steering-committee>.

