



Lung Health Provisions in Year-End Legislative Package

After weeks of anticipation, Congress passed a final legislative package Monday, December 21, 2020, which the President then signed on Monday, December 28, 2020. As a result, several important lung health provisions – in both the COVID-19 relief bill and the Fiscal Year 21 (FY21) appropriations bill – became law:

Lung Health

- **Surprise medical bills** have come to an end. Far too many individuals have faced financial devastation at the hands of this damaging practice, and many more have avoided needed care due to the fear of being subjected to surprise bills they cannot afford. By establishing protections against surprise billing, Congress took a critical step toward freeing individuals from these fears and undue burdens.
- A program for **Chronic Disease Education and Awareness** was established in the FY21 appropriations bill at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that could provide much needed funding for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- **Medicaid coverage** was reinstated for Marshall Islanders.
- **Coverage of care associated with clinical trials** became required in Medicaid.
- Budget neutrality was waived for **oxygen within Medicare**, giving the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) needed regulatory flexibility to address access issues.
- **Lung cancer research received \$20 million** in funding at the Department of Defense (DOD) for FY21.
- **Public health data system modernization** received \$500 million over the next five years to improve tracking and reporting of the impact that COVID-19 has had on diverse communities.
- **NIH received \$42.9 billion** FY21, a modest increase from FY20.
- States, tribal, territorial and local governments were allocated **\$8.75 billion for COVID-19 vaccine distribution**.

Tobacco

- The **“Preventing Online Sales of E-Cigarettes to Children,”** which makes e-cigarettes nonmailable matter and requires online retailers to pay tobacco taxes in other states, was included.
- CDC’s **Office on Smoking and Health** received a \$7.5 million increase for FY21.

Healthy Air

- **Clean air programs and grants** at the Environmental Protection Agency received increases in funds for the first time in a while.
- An 85% phasedown in the production of **climate-warming hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)** -- with exemptions to ensure the continued production of metered-dose inhalers -- was included to reduce climate pollution while still maintaining care for those who need it.
- The **Diesel Emissions Reduction Act** was reauthorized at \$100 million until 2024 – the first time it has been reauthorized since 2010.
- Extensions of **tax credits for wind and solar projects** and energy efficiency were finally achieved after failing to make it into the last spending bill.
- Stronger **methane leak detection requirements** for the pipeline industry were included.
- The **largest energy package** in a decade was included that will provide billions of dollars to research, develop, and deploy clean energy technology.