

THE
NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

Congress' Extensive Opioid Legislation Becomes Law

Monday, October 29, 2018

On Wednesday, October 24, President Trump signed the Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act ([H.R. 6](#)) into law.

The bill signing occurred three weeks following Congress' overwhelming approval of the measure, and nearly one year since the Trump Administration deemed America's opioid crisis a federal public health emergency. House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Greg Walden (R-OR) and Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN), chief architects of the legislation, joined patient advocates and congressional and agency leaders at the White House ceremony.

H.R. 6, which represents a bipartisan, bicameral agreement, largely modifies Medicare and Medicaid policies to better prevent and combat opioid abuse. Other elements seek to expand comprehensive substance use disorder treatment supports, particularly in local communities, as well as address associated health workforce shortages.

While House and [Senate](#) leadership embraced pre-conference discussions to allow for the swift negotiation of a final package, differing opinions on several provisions still proved contentious.

By approving a partial repeal of the decades-old Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMD) exclusion, conferees ultimately permitted states for five years to request Medicaid payment for 30-day inpatient addiction treatment at facilities with more than 16 beds.

Additionally, following considerable debate and stakeholder input, conferees opted not to loosen certain information-sharing amongst providers by rejecting the alignment of privacy provisions governing patient substance use disorder records with 42 CFR, Part 2 laws.

© Copyright 2019 Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP

Source URL: <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/congress-extensive-opioid-legislation-becomes-law>

SQUIRE 
PATTON BOGGS

Article By [M. Victoria Cram](#)
[John E. Wyand](#)[Charles T. Brereton](#)
[Squire Patton Boggs \(US\) LLP](#)[Triage](#)

[Election Law / Legislative News](#)
[Health Law & Managed Care](#)
[All Federal](#)