

## Five-Year Hospital At Home Extension Clears House, Heads To Senate

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(Inside Health Policy)

House lawmakers passed a bill extending CMS' Acute Hospital Care at Home (AHCAH) program for five years under suspension of the rules, moving a step closer toward decoupling the bipartisan initiative from government funding bills.

“One of the health care-related conversations that frustrates a lot of us around here is the typical year-end health care policy extender mess. The legislation in front of us takes the successful hospital-at-home program and removes it from that chaos by providing a renewed five-year authorization,” House Ways & Means Committee Chair Jason Smith (R-MO) said Monday (Dec. 1).

“I am so delighted to be here this evening to see that my Republican colleagues are in the mood to extending current law,” W&M Vice Ranking Member Gwen Moore (D-WI) said.

The bill, which now heads to the Senate, would extend the AHCAH program through Sept. 30, 2030. The program is currently set to expire on Jan. 30, 2026, when Congress' most recent short-term funding bill for much of the government ends.

**But the AHCAH extension bill, Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act (H.R. 4313/S. 2237), faces uncertain prospects in the upper chamber.**

One lobbyist told *Inside Health Policy* they have not heard of any pushback to the bill from senators, but they also have not heard senators make the bill a priority either. They said they expect senators to quickly pass the bill if it does become a priority because of the bill's bipartisan nature and budget neutrality.

Indeed, S. 2237 has seven Senate cosponsors, four of whom are Democrats and three of whom are Republicans, according to congress.gov.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated the hospital-at-home bill would affect federal spending by less than \$500,000, though it's unclear if that would be an increase or decrease. The bill would not affect federal revenue, CBO forecasted.

In addition to extending the AHCAH program, the bill would require CMS submit a report on the program by Sept. 30, 2028.