

WHY RETAIN STRATEGIC HEALTH CARE

Federal policy increasingly determines health-system revenue, regulatory burden, access to capital, and strategic flexibility. The fourth quarter of 2026 is the critical time to prepare for a new Congress, pursue federal funding, and shape the health care affordability agenda that will begin in January 2027.

1. Protect Revenue and Financial Stability. Medicare, Medicaid, 340B, graduate medical education, site-neutral payments, physician reimbursement, rural programs, and federal regulations can each change a health system's finances by millions of dollars. Strategic Health Care identifies threats early, assesses their operational and financial impact, and advocates before harmful proposals become law or final agency policy.

2. Secure a Congressional Earmark. Strategic Health Care can help identify and pursue an eligible Community Project Funding or Congressionally Directed Spending request for capital improvements, equipment, behavioral health, workforce, technology, research, or community health initiatives. The process should begin in October-December 2026 so the project, budget, federal nexus, community support, and congressional sponsorship are ready before formal 2027 deadlines open.

3. Build Relationships With a New Congress and New Committee Leaders. The November elections will bring substantial turnover among members, staff, committee assignments, and leadership. Changes on Senate Finance, Senate HELP, House Ways and Means, and House Energy and Commerce will directly affect Medicare, Medicaid, 340B, insurance, workforce, drug, tax, and public health policy. Strategic Health Care can position the health system with new lawmakers before legislative priorities are fixed.

4. Shape the 2027 Affordability Agenda. Affordability will continue to drive federal health policy, including premiums, deductibles, drug prices, hospital bills, employer costs, transparency, site-neutral payments, Medicare Advantage, consolidation, and administrative burden. Policies promoted as reducing costs may instead cut hospital payments, increase administrative expenses, and/or weaken access. Strategic Health Care helps the system advance credible affordability solutions that protect patients, the workforce, and financial stability.

5. Advance the Health System's Own Policy Initiatives. The opening months of a new Congress are when legislation, hearings, coalitions, and committee agendas take shape. Strategic Health Care can develop policy proposals, draft legislative language, recruit bipartisan sponsors, and build support for payment reform, regulatory relief, workforce investments, rural and behavioral health programs, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, telehealth, and innovative care-delivery demonstrations.

6. Provide Specialized Representation Before Congress, CMS, and HHS. Many consequential decisions are made through CMS rules, Medicaid guidance, audits, waivers, demonstrations, conditions of participation, and subregulatory instructions—not only through legislation. Strategic Health Care combines congressional advocacy with detailed knowledge of hospital operations, reimbursement, appropriations, and agency processes to pursue both legislative and administrative solutions.

7. Turn Washington Intelligence Into Action. Health systems do not need another general newsletter; they need early, customized intelligence and a clear response strategy. Strategic Health Care provides direct senior-level representation, financial and operational analysis, executive and board briefings, comment letters, congressional and agency meetings, hospital site visits, coalition development, and continuous identification of federal funding opportunities.

8. Gain a Voice Beyond the Trade Associations. Trade associations remain important, but consensus-based positions are often diluted to accommodate diverse members, and developing policy can take time. Strategic Health Care gives the health system an independent, immediate voice in Washington—allowing it to advance

its own priorities, respond quickly, and advocate when an association cannot take a sufficiently strong position.