



After a long week and weekend of political/process maneuvering, the House has passed the two critical bills that will lay the groundwork for sweeping changes to the United State's health care system: (1) the House voted to pass the Senate's version of the Health Care Reform bill ("Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act"); and (2) the House approved a series of changes to the Senate's bill to adjust provisions including timing and taxation ("Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010"). The second bill will go to the Senate for approval this week; by virtue of using the "budget reconciliation" process, the Senate vote only requires a simple majority for the bill to pass and it is expected to do so. President Obama may have both bills on his desk for signature this week.

In the coming weeks we will be reviewing and summarizing the bill's provisions and sending out more information. Most of the immediate (i.e., 2010) impacts will be on the insurance reform side (e.g., prohibiting denial/termination of insurance coverage when member becomes ill, extending dependent coverage through age 26). The individual mandate for coverage would take place in 2014. The "Cadillac" tax – the threshold for which was increased under the reconciliation bill to \$10,200 per individual and \$27,500 per family – would not be effective until 2018.