21st Century Cures Bill’s Next Steps

The House Energy and Commerce Committee unanimously passed the 21st Century Cures legislation, which includes $13.2 billion in offsets to help pay for the bill’s increased funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The offsets call for selling off some of the nation’s strategic petroleum reserves; modifying the timing of pre-payments on Medicare Part D; limiting federal Medicaid matching for durable medical equipment reimbursement to Medicare rates; and accelerating the modernization of x-ray imaging. The bill approved by the Committee also includes a $550 million Cures Innovation Fund, and protects FDA user fees funding from sequestration cuts.

The House Ways and Means Committee is the next step for the 21st Century Cures bill, which will also need to be discussed by the Appropriations, Budget and Rules committees prior to an envisioned House floor vote in late June. A congressional aide confirmed that there is overlap in jurisdiction on several areas of the bill, which was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee on May 19th. The Senate may take up the legislation in August or sometime after the Labor Day recess.