

Eli's Rehab Report

Industry Notes: Therapy Cap Elimination Almost Made It Into Doc Fix

Providers of Part B therapy, including home health agencies who furnish the service in patients' homes, came very close to being rid of the burdensome therapy caps with the "doc fix" bill that **President Obama** signed into law on April 16.

At the last minute, Sens. **Ben Cardin** (D-Md.), and **David Vitter** (R-La.), pushed for an amendment to add a full therapy cap repeal to the Sustainable Growth Rate legislation. Unfortunately, the amendment did not pass, but the vote was extremely close □ 58 in favor, with 60 needed to pass. (No amendment offered to the bill passed.)

"This is the first time there has ever been a full-chamber vote on therapy cap repeal, and it came the closest it's ever come [to passing]," says **Mandy Frohlich** with **the American Physical Therapy Association**. "We felt fairly confident that the support was there for 60 votes, but ultimately we think some members may have felt nervous about reopening the House bill or amending it."

Also, the 60-vote threshold was "higher than normal," according to Frohlich. "In any other circumstance, it would have passed with 58 votes, so we're going to continue to keep the pressure on and are looking for opportunities to resolve the issue this year rather than waiting another two and a half years [for the therapy cap exceptions to expire.]"

"We're disappointed in the outcome, but to have received 58 votes for the U.S. Senate is certainly something to carry with us," says **Tim Casey** with **the American Occupational Therapy Association** (AOTA). "We look at this as a building block and that we can hold quite a few members to their vote [in the future.]"

"We are extremely grateful to Senators Cardin and Vitter for championing the bipartisan therapy cap amendment during the Senate floor debate, and thankful for the 56 Senators that joined them in voting in support of the procedure motion," says **Ingrida Lulis** with the **American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**. "We are, however, disappointed at the outcome."