



**Joe Albanese**, Director of Policy, Center for Medicare

Joe Albanese is the Director of Policy at the Center for Medicare. Joe was previously a Senior Policy Analyst at Paragon Health Institute where his work included numerous published reports and congressional testimonies pertaining to Medicare. Prior to that, he was a Program Examiner on the Medicare team at the White House Office of Management and Budget. Joe holds a Bachelor of Science and Master in Public Policy from Georgetown University.



**Alison Barkoff, JD**, Hirsh Associate Professor of Health Law and Policy and Hirsh Program Director, George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health

Alison Barkoff is the Harold and Jane Hirsh Associate Professor of Health Law and Policy and Hirsh Program Director at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Her research and scholarship focus on health care access, health and public health law, civil rights, disability and aging policy, Medicaid, and long-term services and supports (LTSS).

Prior to joining GW, she led the Administration for Community Living (ACL) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from January 2021 to October 2024, where she served as the advisor to the HHS Secretary on aging and disability policy, oversaw national disability and aging programs, and led cross-agency initiatives related to LTSS, civil rights, housing, direct care workforce, family caregiving, healthy aging, and public health. For more than 25 years, Barkoff has focused on legal and policy advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities, older adults, and others who face barriers to accessing health care and other critical community services. She has testified before Congress and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and is a nationally recognized expert on LTSS, disability and aging policy, Medicaid, and civil rights.



**Amy Comstock Rick, J.D.**, Associate Director for Rare Disease Strategy, CDER and Director of Strategic Coalitions, FDA Rare Disease Innovation Hub

Amy Comstock Rick, J.D., is CDER's Associate Director for Rare Disease Strategy and the Director of Strategic Coalitions for FDA's Rare Disease Innovation Hub (the Hub). She serves in a cross-cutting role across FDA's Center for Drug Evaluations and Research (CDER) and Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) to facilitate implementation of the Hub. She also works closely with both centers to develop and carry

out a rare disease strategic agenda. Ms. Rick, with support from staff in CBER's and CDER's rare disease programs, is the Hub's primary point of engagement for parties external to FDA.

Most recently, Ms. Rick served as Principal Consultant at Leavitt Partners, focusing on health policy matters, with a primary focus on rare disease and medical product development. Before Leavitt Partners, she served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI), a non-profit organization dedicated to providing an innovative, open, balanced exchange of ideas and viewpoints across the field of food and drug law.

Before joining FDLI, Ms. Rick was Chief Executive Officer of the Parkinson's Action Network. Ms. Rick also served as President of the Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research and on the Boards of Directors for Research America, the National Health Council, and the American Brain Coalition.

Ms. Rick had previous federal service as a career attorney at the U.S. Department of Education in 1988, focusing primarily on the field of government ethics. She was the Senate-confirmed Director of the U.S. Office of Government Ethics from 2000 to 2003 and Associate Counsel to the President in the White House Counsel's Office from 1998 to 2000. She received a bachelor of arts degree from Bard College and a juris doctor degree from the University of Michigan.



**Claire Gollegly**, Modern Medicaid Alliance

Claire Gollegly is Vice President of Advocacy with Reservoir Communications Group, where she leads strategic direction and coalition engagement for the Modern Medicaid Alliance. In partnership with more than 150 national and regional organizations, the Alliance educates policymakers, stakeholders, and the public about the benefits of Medicaid and advocates for a strong, sustainable program for the millions of Americans who rely on it.

Claire has supported the Modern Medicaid Alliance for more than six years, including in her previous role as Director of Public Affairs & Campaigns with AHIP prior to joining Reservoir. In addition to her focus on strengthening Medicaid, Claire has a strong background in public affairs, advocacy, and coalition and stakeholder engagement on a range of healthcare coverage and access issues.



**Hannah Green, MPH**, Assistant Vice President, Nationwide Policy, American Lung Association.

Hannah Green is the Assistant Vice President for Nationwide Policy for the American Lung Association. Hannah oversees federal advocacy and nationwide policy work on access to care, lung health and tobacco control and serves as the Lung Association's expert on Medicaid policy.

Hannah received her BA in Government from Smith College and her MPH from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health.

She previously worked on health care issues for Congressman Waxman on the House and Energy and Commerce Committee.



**David Machledt, PhD**, Director, Delivery Systems Practice Area, National Health Law Program

David Machledt is the Director of the Delivery Systems Practice Area at the National Health Law Program's Washington, DC, office. His work includes advocacy on holding managed care organizations accountable for providing timely access to high-quality care for low-income and underserved communities. He has also advocated to improve access to coverage and care for older adults and people with disabilities, including serving for seven years as co-chair of the Health Task Force for the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD).

His prior work includes analysis of Medicaid demonstrations and waivers, including work requirements and health care affordability.

David has a PhD in medical anthropology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, with a focus on immigration and public health policy.



**Polly Webster, JD, MPH**, Senior Health Counsel, Senate Committee on Finance

Polly Webster is the Senior Health Counsel for the Senate Committee on Finance. Polly has expertise in prescription drug policy, and experience working in the House and Senate.

Prior to working with the Senate Finance Committee, Polly served as the Vice President of Federal Affairs for the Association for Accessible Medicine (AAM). In this role, Polly advocated on behalf of AAM's interests to congressional leaders and the White House.

Before joining AAM, Polly was the Principal Policy Advisor, Government Relations for Kaiser Permanente, where she led the organization's work on prescription drug policy and regulations. Polly also served as Health Policy Director for Congresswoman Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Health Policy Fellow on the Democratic Senate Committee on Finance and with Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV).

Polly received her bachelor's degree from Denison University, her Master of Public Health from George Washington University, and her law degree from Georgetown University.



**Jaime Varela**, Professional Staff, U.S. House Appropriations Committee

Jaime A. Varela is a Professional Staff Member on the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Subcommittee of the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations. He is responsible for funding the CDC, ASPR, SAMHSA, and ACF. Previously, Jaime was the Director of Federal Affairs for the State of Florida where he was responsible for carrying out the Governor's federal health priorities. Jaime began his career on Capitol Hill serving as a health policy aide to former Senator Marco Rubio.

His responsibilities included advising the Senator on policy matters throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and staffing the Senator on the U.S. Senate Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee and the Special Committee on Aging. Jaime is currently a doctoral student at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. He holds his Master of Public Administration from the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy and a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from California State University, Long Beach.