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Hughes Hubbard Partner Seth Rothman Interviewed on Federal News Radio

News & Events

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April 20, 2017 — On April 11, Seth Rothman was interviewed on Federal News Radio in Washington, D.C. regarding the 21st Century Cures Act, bipartisan legislation intended to modernize the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Rothman was invited to appear on [The Federal Drive](#), a popular weekday morning radio program, after an op-ed he co-authored, "FDA Faces Uncertainty Implementing 21st Century Cures Act," was published in Law360 on March 15.

During the interview, Rothman explained that the legislation promotes innovative projects, supports state efforts to curb opioid abuse, promotes the discovery of new medical products and accelerates the FDA approval of new medicines and medical devices.

But the FDA's implementation of the act, one of the last bills President Obama signed into law, stalled after President Trump ordered a 90-day freeze on the hiring of federal employees and signed an executive order directing agencies to eliminate two regulations for every new one created.

"It looks like the hiring freeze is not going to be as limiting on the FDA as initially was believed because the president's memorandum allows the head of any executive department or agency to exempt from the freeze any positions that it deems necessary to meet public safety responsibilities," Rothman said. He added that in early February, the acting deputy secretary of Health and Human Services issued a memo deeming various medical and scientific positions in the FDA to be exempt from the freeze.

"So they do have a lot of ability to hire people," he said. "Whether they can hire everybody they need remains to be seen."

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Seth D. Rothman