American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, October 15, 2021

The following information comes from directly from news sources including Bloomberg Government, Kaiser Health News, and other news sources.

Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

• Biden travels to Connecticut today to speak about his economic agenda. The president will deliver remarks in Hartford at 1:45 p.m. At 4 p.m., Biden will speak at the dedication of the Dodd Center for Human Rights at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, Conn.

• He is scheduled to return to the White House at 7 p.m.

CONGRESS:

• The House could consider three labor-related bills: Workplace accommodations for nursing mothers — such as reasonable break times and private lactation areas — would be expanded under H.R. 3110. Employers would be prohibited from limiting, segregating, or classifying job applicants based on their age under H.R. 3992. Federal domestic violence prevention and services grants would be reauthorized at a level of $270 million annually from fiscal 2022 through 2026 under H.R. 2119.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

• Bloomberg Government: Democrats Shift Expectations for Drug Pricing: Democratic leaders say they’re eyeing a less aggressive drug pricing proposal in their broad tax and social spending legislation, which may offer some relief to drugmakers concerned about the original plan. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) told California’s KQED Wednesday she doesn’t expect her own signature drug-pricing bill to be included in a sweeping domestic spending package being developed by lawmakers. Now, much remains unknown about what kind of drug pricing efforts the Democratic caucus can rally behind.

• Bloomberg Government: Warren, Grassley Repeat Call for FDA Hearing Aid Rule: Sens. Warren and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) repeated calls for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to advance regulations for over-the-counter hearing aids. The senators sent a letter to acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock urging the agency to issue its proposed rule by Nov. 6, in accordance with Biden’s executive order to promote competition,

• The Wall Street Journal: Moderna Booster Shot Backed By FDA Advisory Panel: Moderna said the booster doses can be drawn from the same vials that contain the original two-dose vaccine series, meaning the boosters will be available soon after authorization. Members of the FDA’s vaccine-advisory panel supported Moderna’s booster dose even though the evidence for it was from a small study and had mixed results.
Bloomberg Government: In the Senate: Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said he will tee up a floor vote for Wednesday on advancing a Democrat-drafted overhaul of U.S. election laws, a move that is likely to be blocked by Republicans and set up another confrontation over whether to alter or end the filibuster. In a letter to all Senate Democrats, Schumer said he will take steps Monday to set up the vote for later in the week on “consequential voting rights legislation that has the support of our entire caucus.”

Bloomberg Government: Bills to Avoid ‘Telehealth Cliff’ Delayed by Higher Priorities: Lawmakers are struggling to push widely supported legislation that would end the “telehealth cliff” through a logjam created by their intense focus on more divisive priorities—such as the Democratic spending package, bipartisan infrastructure bill, addressing the debt ceiling and funding the government. “There’s not much oxygen in the room, even for an issue of agreement,” said Kyle Zebley, vice president of public policy for the American Telemedicine Association.

New Orleans Times-Picayune: New Orleans Ambulances To Carry Blood For Pre-Hospital Transfusions: Starting Monday, New Orleans Emergency Medical Services will carry blood in its ambulances for transfusions before arriving at a hospital. The agency has partnered up with The Blood Center to launch the initiative, which it says is the first of its kind in the region. Uncontrolled bleeding is the leading cause of preventable death, and death by bleed-out mostly happens before a patient arrives at a hospital, the agency said. Studies have shown that pre-hospital transfusions can significantly improve a patient's chance of surviving traumatic injuries.