

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, October 16, 2019

(The following information comes from Bloomberg Government Website)

Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

- 10:25am: President Trump meets with President Sergio Mattarella of Italy at White House
- Noon: Trump, Mattarella hold joint press conference
- 12:45pm: Trump has lunch with Sec. of State Mike Pompeo
- 3pm: Trump meets with congressional leadership
- 6:30pm: Trump delivers remarks at reception in honor of Italy's Mattarella

CONGRESS

- House meets at 10am; set to consider H.J. Res. 77, a resolution opposing President Trump's moves in Syria
 - House to also consider H.R. 1815, on SEC disclosures, and H.R. 3624 on reporting overseas employees to SEC
 - BGOV Bill Summary: H.R. 1815, SEC Retail Investor Testing
 - BGOV Bill Summary: H.R. 3624, Report Overseas Employees to SEC
- 10am: House Republican leaders hold press conference
- 11:30am: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi holds press conference on H.R. 3, a bill aim at lowering drug costs
- Michael McKinley, who recently resigned as a senior adviser to Sec. of State Mike Pompeo, is scheduled to speak to impeachment investigators today
 - White House Chose Trio to Conduct Ukraine Policy, Congress Told
- Senate meets at 9:30am; set to resume consideration of Barbara Barrett to be sec. of Air Force

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **No Formal Vote:** Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) yesterday confirmed that the full House won't vote to formalize the impeachment inquiry at this point, repeating her argument that there is "no requirement" for there to be a floor vote for the investigation to continue. Trump and his allies have argued that the inquiry was illegitimate without a formal House vote.

- **Giuliani, Ex-Rep. Sessions Subpoenaed:** Former Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Texas) has been subpoenaed in the Manhattan federal prosecutors' investigation of Rudy Giuliani, The Wall Street Journal reports. Giuliani is the main focus of that subpoena, which seeks records related to Giuliani's Ukraine business dealings as well as his involvement in efforts to remove the U.S. ambassador in Kyiv, the Journal reports.
- **Pence Rebuffs Document Requests:** Vice President Mike Pence's counsel told House lawmakers in a letter yesterday that Pence's office isn't cooperating with a request for documents related to the probe of Trump's relations with Ukraine.
 - House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) told reporters yesterday that "the case for obstruction of Congress continues to build" as the three House panels, Intelligence, Oversight and Foreign Affairs, pursue their investigation. He cited a "complete effort by the administration to stonewall" the probe.
- **Bipartisan Turkey Resolution:** Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) yesterday released text of a resolution opposing Trump's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from northeastern Syria that critics say greenlit a Turkish slaughter of Kurdish allies. The House will vote on the measure today.
 - "We have always maintained that, while certainly needed, a sanctions package alone is insufficient for reversing this humanitarian disaster," they said in a statement. "With one voice, we call on President Trump to support Kurdish communities, to work to ensure that the Turkish military acts with restraint, and to present a clear strategy to defeat ISIS."
 - The White House has invited House and Senate leaders to a meeting with Trump to discuss Turkey tentatively scheduled for today at 3 p.m., according to the White House daily schedule.
 - Meanwhile, Vice President Pence will meet President Recep Tayyip Erdogan tomorrow in Ankara and reiterate Trump's commitment to U.S. sanctions, according to a White House statement yesterday. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien and U.S. Ambassador to Turkey James Jeffrey will be on trip that begins today, the White House said.
- **Supporting Hong Kong Protests:** The House gave support to pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong by passing a measure (H.R. 3289) yesterday that would require annual reviews of whether the city is sufficiently autonomous from Beijing to justify its special trading status under U.S. law. The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act is one of four measures that got a House vote yesterday. The measure also provides for sanctions against officials that are "responsible for undermining fundamental freedoms and autonomy in Hong Kong." A similar bill is also before the Senate, though the timing of a vote there remains uncertain.

- China threatened to retaliate if Congress follows through with enacting the legislation. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement today that it would take strong measures if the bill passed.
- **‘Slump’ in Spending Talks:** Negotiations in Congress on fiscal 2020 spending measures needed to keep the federal government fully open after Nov. 21 are in a “prolonged slump” and some decisions need to be made by Trump and Senate leaders, Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) told reporters. Shelby said Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) want to move the chamber’s Defense appropriations bill if the panel brings others up for a floor vote. A proposal to bring up small, non-controversial bills doesn’t have McConnell’s support, Shelby said.
- **Yarmuth Revamps Budget Committee Priorities:** Rep. John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) has kept busy in his first year as chairman of the House Budget Committee, refereeing debates on immigration, climate change, single-payer health care and other high-profile policy topics. It’s a sharp turn for a post that usually revolves around wonky, process-oriented fiscal discussions. He has faced an uphill battle in keeping the committee productive, especially as lawmakers rethink the budget and appropriations process and even question whether the Budget Committee should exist. Yarmuth’s panel, for example will meet today to discuss policies that could mitigate the significance of recessions.
- **Higher Ed Ambitions Trimmed:** House Democrats pitched a wide range of policies to help students afford college in their bill to reauthorize federal higher education programs, but stopped short of covering the cost of tuition at four-year public colleges or ensuring students graduate without debt. The measure would, however, pay for tuition at two-year community colleges through a voluntary federal-state partnership, and students attending minority-serving institutions could have as many as 60 credits covered.
 - The plan comes as some progressive lawmakers and presidential candidates have called for the government to cover tuition at all public colleges, not just community colleges. “We believe a more modest proposal can pass in this Congress, and we’ve gone with a more modest approach,” House Education and Labor Chairman Bobby Scott (D-Va.) told reporters yesterday. “If you look at where we are and what the bill does, this is a progressive bill.”
- **Biden Clashes With Warren:** Joe Biden and Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), the two leaders in the Democratic nomination race, finally confronted each other near the end of last night’s debate, clashing over how far and how fast the nation can change -- and who is best equipped to bring it about.
 - The sharp exchange encapsulated the main choice in the contest to challenge Trump in 2020: whether voters want a candidate like Biden who promises to build on the party’s past successes or one like Warren pushing for bold changes that are sure to spark tough partisan fights.
- **The Democratic Presidential Money Race:** Warren matched her steady rise in the polls with a steady growth in fundraising, Sanders still has the support of his small-dollar donor base, and Biden had a fundraising slump as candidates

reported their third-quarter numbers to the Federal Election Commission. Big or small, donors are shaping the race long before the first ballots are cast, determining which candidates will have the resources to compete in the caucuses and primaries next year.

- **Ocasio-Cortez, Omar Will Endorse Sanders:** Sanders secured two endorsements from high-profile Democratic freshmen -- Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) -- giving him a star-power boost for his rally in New York this weekend. Ocasio-Cortez will join the Sanders's event on Saturday, according to Sanders campaign manager Faiz Shakir. "She will help us build the multiracial working class coalition we need to win and transform this country," Shakir said of the congresswoman from the Bronx. The move by the first-term representative is a boost to Sanders' campaign.
- **Amid Divide, Nationals Unite Washington:** The Washington Nationals didn't just banish eight decades of baseball futility in the U.S. capital by making it to the World Series. The team accomplished what generations of politicians promised but couldn't do: bring Washington together. Nationals Park was a cauldron of yelling, delirious fans as the team defeated the St. Louis Cardinals 7-4 last night. The Nationals swept the Cardinals in four games and now advance to the Fall Classic, with the initial game set for Oct. 22.
- **Turkey Rejects Demand for Syria Cease-Fire:** President Erdogan rejected the Trump administration's demand for a cease-fire in Syria but signaled compromise over two key border towns that Turkey previously wanted to remove from Kurdish control. Speaking to reporters on the flight back from Azerbaijan, Erdogan said he told Trump that his military has no plans to target Kobani and that the Manbij takeover by Syrian leader Bashar Al-Assad's forces is "not too negative" for Turkey. His remarks were published on the presidency's website late yesterday. Turkey's president also said that he rejected an offer from Trump for the U.S. to broker talks between Turkey and the main Kurdish militia, or YPG, in Syria. Turkey won't sit at the same table with "terrorist organizations," Erdogan said.
- **Turkey's Halkbank Faces U.S. Charges:** The U.S. brought a criminal case against one of Turkey's largest banks for aiding a scheme to evade sanctions against Iran, a move that carries political overtones as tensions build over Turkey's military incursions in Syria. In an indictment filed yesterday in Manhattan federal court, prosecutors accused government-owned Halkbank of participating in a wide-ranging plot to violate prohibitions on Iran's access to the U.S. financial system. The conspiracy involved high-ranking government officials in Iran and Turkey, the U.S. said.
- **Candidates Pressured on SCOTUS Picks:** Democratic presidential candidates should speak up about who they'd nominate to the Supreme Court if elected, a liberal advocacy group said in releasing its own list of potential picks. Demand Justice's list was released before Democratic candidates took the debate stage. Though some Democratic candidates have expressed interest in expanding the court, judicial nominations haven't been a key topic of discussion in debates or on the campaign trail to date.

- **Attwood Re-Nominated:** Trump has nominated Cynthia L. Attwood to serve a third term on the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. Her previous term on the three-member panel expired April 27, 2019. The commission weighs in on disputes between regulators and companies on Occupational Safety and Health Administration citations and the appropriateness of civil penalties assessed for health and safety issues. It currently does not have a quorum.
- **Former Google Lobbyist Joins APCO:** Susan Molinari, Google's former top lobbyist in Washington, is joining APCO Worldwide, the consultancy announced. Molinari, a Republican who represented New York in the House, had shifted to an advisory role at the company at the end of 2018 as its new global policy chief, Karan Bhatia, reorganized the team. She will join APCO's International Advisory Council of former elected officials, business leaders, academics and journalists as a corporate communication strategy adviser, the advisory and lobbying communications consultancy said in its announcement.
- **Trump, Italian President to Discuss Digital Tax, Huawei:** Trump and Italian President Sergio Mattarella will likely discuss digital tax, adoption of Huawei's 5G products and NATO member contributions when they meet at the White House today, a senior administration official told reporters. Trump thinks any adoption of a such a digital tax by allies would be unfair to U.S. companies and if implemented the U.S. would retaliate, the official said.
- **Changing Infrastructure Permitting:** The White House has begun reviewing a plan to change the way that it issues environmental permits for infrastructure projects. If the proposal is finalized, it could speed up National Environmental Policy Act reviews for roads, bridges, ports, pipelines, power lines, Internet trunks, and water systems. For now, however, the proposal from the White House Council on Environmental Quality is still at least several months from completion.
- **Opening Tongass to Logging:** Over 9 million acres of Alaska's Tongass National Forest would be opened to logging under a U.S. Forest Service proposal issued yesterday that would exempt the entire forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule. The plan offers six different alternatives for the future of one of North America's most carbon-dense temperate rainforests. The Forest Service's preferred option is to drop roadless protections for the Tongass, as requested by the state of Alaska.