

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, October 27, 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 will participate virtually at 8:30 a.m. in the annual East Asia Summit to discuss issues facing the Indo-Pacific region.

### CONGRESS:

- The House plans to vote on five measures under expedited procedure.
- The Senate is scheduled to vote on three of Biden's circuit court nominees, three assistant attorneys general nominees, and the president's solicitor general pick.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Politico: Democrats Pitch Industry-Friendly Medicaid Workaround To Win Manchin's Support:** Democrats are coalescing around a plan to offer a few years of subsidized private insurance to uninsured people with lower incomes in states that refused to expand Medicaid. The latest idea is an attempt to save a pillar of the party's health care agenda as members rush to broker final agreements on their sweeping social spending package. The plan is more amenable to the private insurance industry and comes days after Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) expressed opposition to the party's preferred proposal: to create a new federal program that mirrors Obamacare's Medicaid expansion.
- **USA Today: Medicaid: Sen. Manchin Opposes Expansion In Biden's Build Back Better:** One Senate Democrat could block an effort by his colleagues to extend health care to millions of poor people in a dozen states. For West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, his opposition is a matter of fairness. Taxpayers in his state - and in the 37 other states that have expanded Medicaid eligibility under the 2010 Affordable Care Act - pick up 10% of the cost to cover low-income residents who are covered by the law. Why then, he argues, should the federal government now pay for 100% of the cost in the states that have refused the 90-10 split - as Democrats are proposing to do in the massive social spending bill pending in Congress.
- **Bloomberg Government: Wyden Says Drug Price Caps to Extend to Private Plans:** Caps on drug price increases will extend to private, employer-sponsored insurance plans under Democrats' drug pricing legislation, Senate Finance Chairman Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) said yesterday. Democrats want to require drugmakers that increase their prices faster than inflation to pay back that excess amount to the federal government. Democrats previously wavered on whether key parts of their drug pricing legislation could apply to private plans

but Finance Committee staff have written the provision to survive Senate parliamentary challenge, Wyden said,

- **Bloomberg Government: Progressives Skeptical on Infrastructure Vote:** Progressives Democrats in the House aren't satisfied that an emerging framework gives them the details they need to clear the way for a vote on a \$550 billion roads and bridges bill. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) emerged from a meeting with Progressive Caucus Chair Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) hopeful that progressives would back the infrastructure package as the outline of a deal begins to emerge on the larger tax and spending package. Jayapal said she doesn't want a framework, she wants a bill. While progressives would welcome a verbal agreement on the tax and spending package by the end of the week, she said, there's no chance that infrastructure would get a House vote based on that.
- **Bloomberg Government: Private Insurers to Be Covered:** Caps on drug price increases will extend to private, employer-sponsored insurance plans under Democrats' drug pricing legislation, Wyden said yesterday. Requiring drugmakers that increase their prices faster than inflation to pay back that excess amount to the federal government has widespread support among Democrats, Wyden said. Extending the policy to private plans would mean tamping down price hikes for millions more Americans, he said. "A lot of my colleagues very much like the anti-price gouging provisions that we've put out," Wyden said. "We figured out a way to extend that to the private sector."
- **Bloomberg Government: FCC Picks Are Prelude to Net Neutrality Push:** Biden's plan to nominate Jessica Rosenworcel to lead the Federal Communications Commission and Gigi Sohn to another agency seat sets the stage for a Democratic effort to restore net neutrality rules. With a Democratic majority in place, restoring net neutrality rules governing how internet service providers like AT&T and Comcast manage their networks is expected to be at the top of Democrats' wish list. Democrats likely are unable to move to reimpose the rules until the Senate acts on Biden's picks, however, because the FCC currently has two Democratic and two Republican members. For now, Rosenworcel can only remain at the agency until the end of the congressional session unless the Senate confirms her to another term.
- **KHN: Medicare Plans' 'Free' Dental, Vision, Hearing Benefits Come At A Cost:** When Teresa Nolan Barendfeld turned 65 last year, she quickly decided on a private Medicare Advantage plan to cover her health expenses. Barendfeld, a freelance editor from Chatham, New York, liked that it covered her medications, while her local hospitals and her primary care doctor were in the plan's network. It also had a modest \$31 monthly premium. She said it was a bonus that the plan included dental, hearing and vision benefits, which traditional Medicare does not.