

## American Nephrology Nurses Association

### Daily Capitol Hill Update – Tuesday, November 12, 2019

(The following information comes from Bloomberg Government Website)

#### Schedules: White House and Congress

##### WHITE HOUSE

- Noon: Trump speaks at Economic Club of New York luncheon at New York Hilton Midtown
- 1:55pm: Trump participates in roundtable with supporters at InterContinental New York Barclay; delivers remarks at 2:30pm
- 5:25pm: Trump arrives back at White House
- 2:30pm: Vice President Mike Pence meets with U.S. Ambassador to France, Jamie McCourt
- 7:05pm: Pence, wife Karen Pence participate in the Kuwait-America Foundation 2019 Gala Dinner at Kuwaiti Ambassador's residence

##### CONGRESS

- House returns Tuesday at 2pm
- Senate returns at 3pm Tuesday; resumes consideration of nomination of Chad Wolf to be undersecretary for strategy, policy and plans at Dept. of Homeland Security

#### Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Drug Measure Vote Seen in December:** House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) is expecting to push a floor vote to December on a bill (H.R. 3) to lower the costs of prescription drugs. "As we wait for a final CBO score, I anticipate bringing this bill to the floor for a vote in December," Hoyer said in a letter to colleagues on Friday, referencing a CBO cost estimate. The House had planned to vote in mid-November on the bill.
  - Meanwhile, Trump's Domestic Policy Council Chief Joe Grogan said capping what drugmakers can charge for their products could find common ground in Congress, but he doubts any bill that moves will tackle the issue of drug rebates. Congress and the administration are "out of time" to add new ideas like rebates to drug legislation and need to focus on things that are already moving.
  - Grogan said a separate drug pricing measure (S. 2543) proposed by Senate Finance Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and ranking Democrat Ron Wyden (Ore.) is a product of a "good bipartisan collaboration." He is continuing to work with their staffs to improve the bill that passed out of the committee. The bill's cap on what drug companies can charge – tied to the rate of inflation – is the "route to a bipartisan bill," Grogan said.

- **Canadians Fight U.S. Plan to Import Drugs:** Canadian pharmacy and doctors' groups, fearing domestic shortages, are pushing their government to make opposing the Trump administration's drug-importation plan a major focus of the new government. A coalition of health groups, including the Canadian Medical Association and McKesson Canada, have started a campaign aimed at demanding Ottawa to take measures to block importation projects from states like Florida. They warn allowing wholesale importation of medicines into the U.S. will mean fewer supplies at home.

  - While Canadian government officials have publicly opposed importation plans and say they can't help lower U.S. drug costs, America's neighbor to the north hasn't installed any new regulations or laws that would block bulk importation of low-cost drugs, said Joelle Walker, vice president of public affairs for the Canadian Pharmacist Association.
- **Warren Challenges Pelosi on Medicare for All:** Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) said building support from Democratic voters for Medicare for All is a greater priority than convincing Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) or moderate Democrats to embrace the proposal. "We're not there," Warren told reporters in New Hampshire yesterday. "We're not there because we need to be out talking about people's experiences right now, experiences with people with health care insurance."

  - Warren last month offered details of her \$21 trillion signature plan for a government-run health care system that ends private insurance and would be paid for by a tax on wealth. In an interview with Bloomberg News, Pelosi said she's "not a fan" of the proposal. Warren also faces opposition from Republicans and moderate Democrats, including fellow presidential candidates Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg.
- **Medical Workforce:** The House Small Business Committee holds a hearing Wednesday on upskilling the medical workforce and health innovation.
- **Public Impeachment Hearings:** The public hearings start at 10 a.m. Washington time Wednesday. Democrats on the Intelligence Committee will try to make the case that Trump committed "high crimes and misdemeanors" -- the U.S. Constitution's standard for impeachment by the House and a Senate trial on whether to convict and remove a president from office.
- **Trump May Release Transcript Today:** Trump said he's prepared to release the transcript sought by House Democrats of his first phone call with Ukraine's president, in April, as soon as today. "We'll probably give it to you on Tuesday, Monday being a holiday," Trump told reporters Saturday as he prepared to board Air Force One. "We have another transcript coming out, which is very important. They asked for it. And I'd gladly give it."
- **Republican Witnesses May Testify:** Democrats signaled their willingness to let some witnesses requested by Republicans testify, but only those people with knowledge of the president's actions. And not Hunter Biden or the whistleblower. Republicans gave the committee a list of witnesses they want called -- including former Vice President Joe

Biden's son, Hunter, and the anonymous whistleblower whose complaint sparked the inquiry.

- Reps. Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) and Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.), both members of the House Intelligence Committee, said on Sunday morning political shows that there are Republican witnesses Schiff could call. Speier suggested former National Security Council official Tim Morrison and former U.S. special representative to Ukraine Kurt Volker could appear.
- **All the President's Yes Men:** Trump's effort to get Ukraine to investigate a top Democratic rival went largely unchecked by some of his closest advisers -- setting in motion the impeachment inquiry now engulfing his presidency. Transcripts released by House impeachment investigators last week offer no evidence that Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney or Secretary of State Michael Pompeo tried to stop Trump from his bid earlier this year for a Ukrainian probe of Biden.
  - The Ukraine episode, depicted in testimony from current and former U.S. officials, illustrates the peril that lies in Trump's preference for advisers who let him follow his instincts in making policy. And it puts a new light on recent comments from former White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, who said last month that he warned the president not to replace him with a yes man or he'd risk being impeached. Trump disputed Kelly's statement.
- **Impeachment Will Reshape 2020 Presidential Race:** The start of public impeachment hearings in the House this week will push the race for the White House into a new phase, testing whether Democratic efforts to investigate Trump risk hurting the party in the 2020 election.
  - Democratic front-runner Joe Biden will also be a central figure in the proceedings, which will challenge his political resilience. And six senators in the running, including top contenders Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), will be jurors in a trial that may force them off the campaign trail at a crucial moment.
  - While U.S. public opinion has moved in favor of impeachment, the country is deeply divided along party lines and Trump remains highly competitive against top Democrats in swing states like Michigan, Florida and Pennsylvania that played the key role in his 2016 victory. The House proceedings will pit the Democrats' message that Trump gravely abused his power against his insistence that the impeachment effort is a political "coup" to remove him from office.
- **Economy Is Working in Trump's Favor:** Factories in Iowa are humming. Employment in New Hampshire is thriving. The giant tourism and hotel industry in Nevada is booming. And in South Carolina, more African Americans are finding jobs. This is the economic landscape less than a year from Election Day -- and just months before those four states become the first in the nation to hold their 2020 primaries.
  - While Trump can point to the strength of the economy as a whole -- as he likely will in a speech today on the economy -- his Democratic rivals have seized on the everyday realities of millions who've watched good times pass them by.

Candidates like Biden and Warren have zeroed in on issues such as income inequality, wage disparity or a lack of health care.

- **Sanders Is Top Choice of Progressives:** Sanders continues to lead as the preferred Democratic presidential choice of members of the influential grassroots progressive group Democracy for America, while Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) has fallen off a list of the top five choices in the organization's latest straw poll. Sanders had support of 35.17% of those surveyed by the group, a political action committee with more than 1 million members. Warren, the other leading progressive in the race, had 27.69%. Biden had 12.08%. Pete Buttigieg had 7.26%, and Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) was picked by 3.72% of those surveyed.
  - Meanwhile, Biden has a small edge over other top Democrats among likely New Hampshire primary voters, according to a Quinnipiac University poll released yesterday. Biden has the support of 20% of those surveyed, while Warren is at 16%. Buttigieg is in third place at 15% and Sanders is in fourth at 14%. The margin of error for the poll, conducted Nov. 6-10, is 3.8%.
- **Cummings' Widow to Run for His Seat:** The wife of former House Oversight Committee Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-Md.) said she would seek his seat following his death last month. Maya Rokeymoore Cummings told Rachel Maddow on MSNBC that she would announce today that she's running in Maryland's seventh congressional district, which includes parts of Baltimore. She said her late husband "wanted me to continue this fight."
- **N.Y. Rep. King to Retire:** Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.) announced his plan to retire from Congress after 14 terms, becoming the 20th member of his party from the House to plan an exit in 2020. King said in a statement yesterday that he made the decision to spend more time with his family. King, a moderate first elected to Congress in 1992, makes clear in his statement that he will vote against any impeachment articles against Trump, and will be supporting Trump's re-election.
- **Trump Urged to Rescind Erdogan Invitation:** House Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) led a bipartisan effort to call on Trump to rescind an invitation for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to visit the White House later this week. "Erdogan's decision to invade northern Syria on October 9 has had disastrous consequences for U.S. national security, has led to deep divisions in the NATO alliance, and caused a humanitarian crisis on the ground," the lawmakers said in a letter. "Given this situation, we believe that now is a particularly inappropriate time for President Erdogan to visit the United States."
- **Haley Says Tillerson, Kelly Sought to Undermine Trump:** Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and former White House Chief of Staff John Kelly tried to undermine Trump's decisions because they said the president didn't know what he was doing, former U.S. ambassador Nikki Haley said in excerpts of a new book. "Kelly and

Tillerson confided in me that when they resisted the president, they weren't being insubordinate, they were trying to save the country," Haley said, according to the Washington Post. "It was their decisions, not the president's, that were in the best interests of America, they said. The president didn't know what he was doing," Haley wrote. She said Tillerson and Kelly tried to enlist her in their effort to work around Trump, but she refused.

- **Trump Says China Wants a Deal More Than He Does:** Trump said trade talks with China are moving along "very nicely," and said the leaders in Beijing wanted a deal "much more than I do." Trump also described as "incorrect" reports about how much the U.S. was ready to roll back tariffs on China. "If we don't make that right deal, we're not going to make a deal," Trump told reporters on Saturday as he prepared to board Air Force One for a trip to Alabama to watch a college football game. "A lot of positive things are happening."
- **Trump to Meet with Vaping Industry:** Trump said he's planning to meet with vaping-industry representatives and medical professionals as the White House considers new limits on the sale of e-cigarettes. The announcement appeared to catch federal regulators as well as pro-vaping groups by surprise. The debate over new restrictions has pitted health advocates concerned about teen nicotine habits against small businesses who say tighter rules would destroy a growing industry. Trump called the issue a "dilemma" in a tweet yesterday. "Children's health & safety, together with jobs, will be a focus!" Trump wrote. Trump has said he's planning to raise the age limit for vaping products to 21 or so.
- **States Step Up Google Scrutiny:** State officials investigating Google met yesterday to dive into competition issues surrounding the search giant as they press forward with an investigation into whether the company is violating antitrust laws, according to people familiar with the matter. The officials met privately in Denver with outside experts with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of Google's businesses and the dynamics of the markets it operates in, including digital advertising, said one of the people.
- **Trump to Appeal Ruling on Tax Subpoena:** Trump's lawyers told a judge they'll ask the U.S. Supreme Court this week to block a subpoena from the Manhattan district attorney seeking his tax filings and other financial records. Lawyers representing Trump and District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. said in a joint letter Friday that Trump will ask for high court review by Thursday and both sides will file legal arguments by Nov. 25, setting up a possibility of finding out quickly whether the Supreme Court will hear the case. If the court declines, that could clear the way for Trump's accountants, Mazars USA, to begin turning documents over to Vance's office as early as next month.