American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, November 24, 2020

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**

- 2pm: President Trump, first lady Melania Trump present national Thanksgiving turkey in White House Rose Garden

**CONGRESS**

- House, Senate out this week

**Consortium, Health Policy, and Political News**

- **Bloomberg Government: Yellen Sets Up Biden to Go Big on Stimulus:** Biden’s selection of Janet Yellen as Treasury Department secretary signals he plans to act aggressively to revive the world’s biggest economy, putting a former Federal Reserve chair who’s not shied away from stimulus at the helm of his economic policy. With Yellen in charge, Biden’s Treasury department will be prepared to join Fed Chairman Jerome Powell’s policy of lower-for-longer interest rates with extended, expansionary government spending.
  - While her reported pick was applauded both on Wall Street and in much of official Washington — even by some of Trump’s allies — Yellen is sure to be tested in her Senate confirmation hearings. Conservatives will probe her views on stimulus spending, and her less confrontational position toward China, a nation many Republicans view as an economic adversary. A front-row witness to the increasingly partisan battles over government spending in Washington over the past quarter-century, Yellen now stands to become a combatant for the first time in her career.

- **Bloomberg Government: California’s Su Rises in Biden Labor Chief Race:** Organized labor’s divide over at least three White men they’re promoting for Biden’s selection as labor secretary has vaulted another candidate with a lower national profile, California Labor Secretary Julie Su, into stronger contention for the job. The splintering in union support spread among Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, Rep. Andy Levin (D-Mich.), and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) has created an opening for Su to quietly gain momentum in the race to be the president-elect’s Labor Department leader, according national and state labor officials, Obama administration alums, worker advocates, and others in close communication with the Biden transition.

- **Bloomberg Government: Union Endorses DeLauro for Appropriations Gavel:** The union representing employees of the National Labor Relations Board endorsed Rep. Rosa
DeLauro (D-Conn.) in the three-way race to succeed retiring Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) as House Appropriations Committee chairwoman, adding to DeLauro’s support from labor groups. DeLauro “has tirelessly defended the civil servants of the NLRB from those that would undermine the enforcement of federal labor law, especially in these last few trying years,” Burt Pearlstone, NLRB Union president, said in a statement. This is the first time the NLRBU has made an endorsement for any position, said Michael Bilik, an attorney who’s on the union’s legislative committee.

- Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) and Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) are also vying for the gavel on the powerful committee.
- DeLauro, chairwoman of the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee is close with Lowey and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), and has garnered endorsements from labor leaders including AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, Service Employees International Union President Mary Kay Henry, and others. Wasserman Schultz, who leads the Military Construction-VA Subcommittee, has run an ambitious dark-horse bid by detailing proposals to get more rank-and-file members involved in the spending process and to review racial inequities in government funding.

- **Bloomberg Government: Hospitals Urge Biden to Extend Emergency Declaration:** The industry group representing for-profit hospitals called on the upcoming Biden administration to extend the public health emergency and its waivers next year. The Federation of American Hospitals said yesterday it will be “crucial” to keep in place for the duration of the public health emergency some of the “foundational steps that Congress and the current Administration have taken over the past eight months to provide support to individuals, states, businesses, and health care providers.”
  - Through various new laws and executive actions under the emergency declaration, hospitals can screen patients for Covid-19 offsite to help avoid outbreaks of the coronavirus within their buildings, get reimbursed for telehealth services at higher-than-normal rates and make other changes to how they treat patients.

- **CIDRAP: Poor Outcomes For COVID-19 Patients With Bloodstream Infections:** A second study in Clinical Infectious Disease late last week detailed poor outcomes for hospitalized COVID-19 patients with secondary bloodstream infections (sBSI). COVID-19 patients with sBSI had greater initial disease severity, longer hospital stays, and a 53.1% in-hospital mortality rate. Limited data suggest higher rates of sBSI—common in patients with flu and other viral respiratory illnesses—in severe COVID-19 patients, perhaps linked to immune dysregulation.