

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, November 25, 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

- President Trump has no public events scheduled
 - Earlier: Trump Expected to Travel to Gettysburg, Pa. Wednesday, CNN Says

CONGRESS

- House, Senate out

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Boston Globe: Alynlam Wins FDA Approval For First Drug To Treat Rare Kidney Disease:** Alynlam Pharmaceuticals Inc. scored its third approval from the US Food and Drug Administration in as many years Monday, this time for a medicine to treat a rare disease that affects the kidneys. The rare disorder – called primary hyperoxaluria type 1 – causes a buildup of oxalate in the body, which when not filtered properly can cause kidney and bladder stones.
- **Bloomberg Government: Building the New Administration:** Biden has named the first senior officials to join his incoming administration, after the outgoing administration formally initiated the transition process. Biden will be naming 23 people in total to cabinet and cabinet-level positions. The president's cabinet includes the vice president, the attorney general and the leaders of the 15 executive departments: Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor, State, Transportation, Treasury, and Veterans Affairs.
- **Politico: Biden Eyes New Mexico Governor, Obama Surgeon General For Health Secretary:** New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy have emerged as top contenders to be President-elect Joe Biden's health secretary, with Hispanic advocacy groups making a strong push for Lujan Grisham. The nomination of Lujan Grisham, 61, would continue a tradition of presidents tapping governors to lead the sprawling Department of Health and Human Services, and make her the first Latina ever nominated for the post. Murthy, a 43-year-old Yale-educated internist who's grown close to Biden as a top adviser on the coronavirus pandemic, would be the first nominee of Indian descent for the department's top job.
- **Bloomberg Government: Lawmakers Reach Deal on Outline for Annual Spending Bill:** Republican and Democratic lawmakers have reached a deal on spending levels for the annual spending bill necessary to keep the federal government open after current funding runs out Dec. 11, according to two congressional aides in both parties. The agreement, struck between Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) and House

counterpart Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) increases hopes that a giant \$1.4 trillion bill to fund the government can pass Congress before the deadline.

- The agreement encompasses top-line amounts for all 12 parts of an omnibus appropriations package as well as the level for emergency spending above the \$1.4 trillion budget cap set in law in 2019. The White House had been trying to force Congress to adopt \$7 billion in cuts to domestic spending by preventing \$12.5 billion in funding for the Veterans Affairs Department from being designated as an emergency.
 - The emergency spending deal is important because if lawmakers had agreed to base funding levels and not emergency funds, they still would have had to debate how much money to spend overall. Aides did not say how much emergency funding is included in this agreement.
- **Bloomberg Government: Obamacare Program for Pre-Existing Conditions Updated:** The Trump administration is changing calculations for a complicated Obamacare program intended to ensure that health insurers are paid when covering the sickest patients. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released a final rule yesterday aimed at improving the patient data used to determine how insurers pay one another for covering high-cost enrollees.
 - **Bloomberg Government: Vaccine Rollout May Come Before CDC Panel Meets:** U.S. distribution of a Covid-19 vaccine might not wait for the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices to recommend how the allocation process should work, Azar said today. "We are not dependent on any delay for ACIP in terms of helping to advise states on their prioritization," he said during a Operation Warp Speed press briefing. But the government plans to ship out the first 40 million doses within 24 hours of an FDA emergency authorization, and Azar signaled it won't wait if ACIP hasn't met.