

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, November 3, 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 in Washington, D.C.
- Trump visits RNC offices in Arlington, Va., at 10am, then returns to White House

CONGRESS

- House, Senate out

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Modern Healthcare: CMS Signs Off On New Payments To Encourage Home Dialysis:** CMS on Monday signed off on its proposal to pay providers extra money if they use home dialysis machines to treat end-stage renal disease patients. The final rule expands a transitional add-on payment to cover home dialysis machines that CMS Administrator Seema Verma touted in July when the agency proposed it, saying the COVID-19 highlighted the need to increase home dialysis access.
- **Bloomberg Government: What Early Voting Says About Turnout:** More than two-thirds of the total votes in 2016 have already been cast in the 2020 election – and all before a single voter casts a ballot at the polls on Election Day. As states expanded rules to allow more voters to cast a mail-in ballot or vote early in person as a precaution against Covid-19, early votes have exceeded 98.8 million as of Monday, according to preliminary data that tally mail and early in-person votes, collected by the Associated Press. That's 1.7 times as much as the early vote total in 2016 (58.8 million votes). With many states offering one remaining day of early in-person voting and allowing for mailed ballots to be received on Election Day or several days after, the final early vote tally will be even higher.
 - It's possible that the surge in early voting won't translate to a higher overall turnout. But according to the baseline scenario of a turnout model developed by data scientist Andrew Therriault, the total number of votes cast for president are expected to range from roughly 142.4 million to 149.6 million.
- **Bloomberg Government: Ex-Officials Call for Organ Donation Revamp:** The U.S. organ donation and transplantation system is convoluted and badly needs changes, a group of former federal technology officers said in a new report. The report identifies inefficient technologies, misaligned incentives, and a monopolistic contracting system as key issues in the organ donation system. It was produced by a group led partly by five former Health and Human Services Department chief technology officers.
- **Politico: Pelosi Eyes Reconciliation To Boost Obamacare, Pandemic Aid:** House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Monday said Democrats will deploy budget reconciliation procedures

next year to enhance the Affordable Care Act and provide additional pandemic relief if the party secures a narrow majority in the Senate, wins the White House and maintains control of the House. "We'll almost certainly be passing a reconciliation bill, not only for the Affordable Care Act, but for what we may want to do further on the pandemic and some other issues that relate to the well-being of the American people," Pelosi said on a call sponsored by the liberal group Protect Our Care. The Supreme Court is set to hear oral arguments next week in the Trump administration's push to overturn the health care law.

- **NPR: Texas Drive-Through Ballots To Be Counted After Federal Court's Ruling:** U.S. District Court Judge Andrew Hanen on Monday threw out a suit challenging the legality of some 127,000 votes cast at drive-through voting sites in the Houston area. He ruled the plaintiffs don't have legal standing to sue. Harris County, Texas' most populous county and majority-Democratic, erected 10 drive-through sites, mostly tents, to expedite the early voting process as a way of allowing people to cast ballots safely during the coronavirus pandemic. They were also in place this summer before the state's primary. Noting that point, Hanen, a George W. Bush appointee, asked plaintiffs, "Why am I just getting this case?" He later said that the suit was not timely and that "this has been going on all summer."
- **The New York Times: Justice Amy Coney Barrett Hears Her First Supreme Court Argument:** Justice Amy Coney Barrett heard her first Supreme Court argument on Monday, asking assured and probing questions in a case on the Freedom of Information Act. ... And with the court hearing arguments by phone on Monday because of the pandemic, Justice Barrett did not join her colleagues on the bench and take the junior justice's traditional seat on its far right. But Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. did start Monday's session by greeting the newest justice.