

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, November 4, 2019

(The following information comes from Bloomberg Government Website)

Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

- 11:45am: President Trump meets with the Secretary of State
- 1:30pm: Trump hosts Washington Nationals, the World Series champions
- 7pm: Trump holds rally in Kentucky for Republican Gov. Matt Bevin on the eve of his election against Democrat Andy Beshear
- Vice President Mike Pence rallies in Miss. for GOP Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves on the eve of his election against Democrat Jim Hood

CONGRESS

- House in recess
- Senate convenes at 1pm for a pro forma session

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Pelosi Sees Drug Price Deal:** Pelosi told Bloomberg on Friday that she thinks a deal with Trump to lower the cost of prescription drugs is possible even amid the impeachment inquiry. Negotiations on a drug price bill continue with the White House, she said, noting that Trump hasn't yet threatened to veto her bill (H.R. 3). Pelosi said Democrats' prescription drug measure was crafted with a bipartisan compromise in mind, seeking to limit what Medicare will pay and then pressure drugmakers to apply lower prices to the commercial market.
- **How Warren Would Fund 'Medicare for All':** Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) unveiled a wide-ranging menu Friday to fund her multi-trillion-dollar "Medicare for All" plan, a defining moment that fleshes out her vision to remake one-fifth of the U.S. economy. The plan would redirect most employer-based health care spending to the government so it can put all Americans on Medicare, while slapping taxes on large corporations and the wealthy, cracking down on tax evasion, cutting defense funds, and putting newly legalized immigrants on the tax rolls.
- **Whistleblower's Lawyer Offers GOP Chance to Question:** The lawyer for the whistleblower behind the report that sparked the House impeachment inquiry said he's offering Republicans the chance to question his client directly -- but only in writing. Mark S. Zaid said on Twitter yesterday that he's extended an offer to Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Calif.), the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, to submit questions that the whistleblower would respond to under oath and the penalty of perjury. But the identity of the whistleblower would remain a secret. The questions "cannot seek

identifying info, regarding which we will not provide, or otherwise be inappropriate. We will ensure timely answers,” Zaid said in a series of tweets.

- **Pelosi Sets High Bar for Impeachment Inquiry:** Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), offering her most expansive view of the impeachment probe to date, said she decided to advance the inquiry into Trump after his phone call with Ukraine’s leader provided her with the “clarity” that prior allegations against Trump lacked. Pelosi said the partial transcript of Trump’s July 25 conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy stood in sharp contrast to the less clear-cut allegations in Robert Mueller’s special counsel report. That phone call -- where Trump is heard urging Zelenskiy to investigate Joe Biden -- was a “bombshell” that peeled away her initial reluctance to take the politically divisive step.
 - “What happened in that phone call undermined the separation of powers, coequal branches of government, checks and balances on each other,” she said in an interview.
 - She also acknowledged the risks to her party and to her House majority -- saying any case made to impeach the president “has to be ironclad.” At the same time, she acknowledged Democrats have a limited amount of time to make it, suggesting the investigation and a decision on drafting articles of impeachment won’t drag on long. “The public has only so much space for drama,” she said. “When does the law of diminishing returns set in? When is the value added not worth the time?”
- **Clyburn Sees Political Risk:** Rep. James Clyburn (D-SC) says impeachment poses political risks to his party, at a time surveys shows nearly half of Americans -- but few Republicans -- support the president’s removal. Moving ahead with a mostly party-line impeachment inquiry could damage Democrats at the polls in 2020, Clyburn said on CNN’s “State of the Union” yesterday. “Sure it could. And that would make this whole process more political than I would like for it to be,” Clyburn said. He added that beyond politics, “this country is worth saving.”
 - A year out from the 2020 election, 49% of those surveyed in an NBC/Wall Street Journal poll taken Oct. 27-30 said they support the impeachment and removal of Trump, up from 43% a month ago. Still, 90% of Republicans are opposed, the poll showed. A Fox News poll had a similar top-line result, with 49% in favor of impeachment, although that was down from 51% in early October.
- **Ukraine Theory Appears in Mueller Document:** BuzzFeed News published the first tranche of FBI documents related to Mueller’s probe into the 2016 election and Russian efforts to aid Trump’s presidential campaign. The debunked theory that Ukraine had meddled in U.S. matters was featured in some of the roughly 500 pages of documents -- in a package BuzzFeed called “The Mueller Report’s Secret Memos” -- posted online Saturday related to interviews with FBI agents. Various email correspondence is also included. BuzzFeed and CNN sued for access to Mueller’s witness interview notes. In October, a judge ordered the Justice Department to release new tranches of the notes monthly to the two news organizations.

- **Pelosi Is Worried 2020 Candidates Are on Wrong Track:** Pelosi is issuing a pointed message to Democrats running for president in 2020: Those liberal ideas that fire up the party's base are a big loser when it comes to beating Trump.

 - Proposals pushed by Sens. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) like Medicare for All and a wealth tax play well in liberal enclaves like her own district in San Francisco but won't sell in the Midwestern states that sent Trump to the White House in 2016, she said. "What works in San Francisco does not necessarily work in Michigan," Pelosi said. "What works in Michigan works in San Francisco — talking about workers' rights and sharing prosperity."

- **Warren-Biden Gap Narrows:** Warren narrowed the gap with former Vice President Joe Biden in primary preferences for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, according to an ABC News/Washington Post poll released yesterday. Biden is seen as the stronger leader of the two, though, with the best chance of defeating Trump in 2020. His support among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents was unchanged at 27% in the survey conducted Oct. 27-30 compared with one in early September, while Warren's rose to 21% from 17%. Senator Bernie Sanders' support held steady at 19%.

 - Trump is competitive in head-to-head match ups with top Democrats in six key battleground states, according to a new set of New York Times/Siena College polls. Across Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Florida, Arizona and North Carolina -- the six states that Trump won most narrowly in 2016 -- the president trails Biden by an average of two percentage points among registered voters -- within the margin of error. Trump leads Warren by two points among registered voters in those states. That's the same margin by which he won over Hillary Clinton there three years ago.

- **Warren Spars Biden Over Health Care:** Warren swatted back at criticism from Biden over her \$21 trillion Medicare-for-All plan Friday, accusing him of "running in the wrong" primary. "Democrats are not going to win by repeating Republican talking points," she said in Des Moines, Iowa. "So, if Biden doesn't like that, I'm just not sure where he's going." Warren's unusually direct attack on a campaign rival came after she released a long-awaited explanation of how she planned to pay for her \$20.5 trillion proposal to create a government health care system. The Biden campaign called her proposal "mathematical gymnastics."

- **Democrats Cool on Wall Street Donors, and the Feeling Is Mutual:** Wealthy donors have long played a central role in Democratic presidential politics: filling campaign coffers, jockeying for influence, and dispensing often unwanted advice to candidates and their staffs. But that system may be in jeopardy. "In this primary season, a paradigm shift has taken place where grassroots donors are much more important to a candidate's success," says Robert Wolf, a major Wall Street fundraiser for Barack Obama who founded 32 Advisors, a strategy and investment firm. A populist money bonanza —

chiefly propelled by Warren and Sanders – has put a scare into people accustomed to being sought after for their ability to write large checks.

- **O'Rourke Drops Out:** Former Rep. Beto O'Rourke's (D-Texas) 2020 presidential run is over. O'Rourke said Friday he was ending his bid for the White House amid lackluster fundraising and poor poll numbers. He did not directly address whether he might run for the Senate from Texas, but said, "I am announcing that my service to the country will not be as a candidate or as the nominee."
- **Homeland Pick Rankles Democrats:** Trump's decision to elevate Department of Homeland Security official Chad Wolf to the agency's top job comes in the face of criticism from Democrats and some immigration foes alike. House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.) said Wolf's selection showed there was "no one left qualified or palatable to Congress" to run the department.
 - White House press secretary Hogan Gidley confirmed the pick to reporters Friday night, after comments made by Trump earlier in the evening left Wolf's status uncertain. Gidley said Wolf, currently interim undersecretary for strategy, policy and plans, would take over as acting secretary after current acting Secretary Kevin McAleenan steps down. It was not immediately clear if Trump would pick a permanent secretary. Gidley said Wolf would serve in the acting role "in the interim" and declined to comment on who Trump would nominate on a permanent basis.
- **Trump Says China Trade Deal Will Be Signed in U.S.:** The "Phase One" trade deal with China, once completed, will be signed somewhere in the U.S., Trump told reporters yesterday at the White House. Trump had previously suggested Iowa, the largest U.S. corn and hog producing state, as a natural setting for the trade agreement to be formalized.
 - Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said yesterday in Bangkok that Alaska and Hawaii, as well as locations in China, were all possible locations for Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping to sign the deal.
 - Meanwhile, the U.S. and China signaled further progress today toward a breakthrough. China had hoped that if Xi traveled to the U.S. to sign a phase one trade deal it would be as part of a state visit, but is open to having him go even if it isn't, people familiar with the matter said. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang today met a U.S. delegation that included National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien and Ross at a regional summit in Bangkok. Before meeting Li, Ross told a morning business forum that the U.S. was "very far along" with "phase one" of a trade deal with China.
- **Trump Tells California to Get 'Act Together' on Fires:** Trump yesterday blasted California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) in a series of Twitter posts for his handling of the devastating wildfires that continue to blaze across the state. Trump said Newsom, a Democrat, has "done a terrible job of forest management." In a second tweet, the

president told Newsom California will no longer receive federal money for help, adding, "Get your act together Governor." Federal agencies own and manage 57% of the state's forests.

- Trump isn't the only person who has weighed in. Republicans and even some Democrats say Newsom needs to move quickly to resolve what has become an untenable problem for California, the world's fifth-largest economy, or the political honeymoon that he's enjoyed for 10 months may be upended by a climatological disaster.

- **Exxon, Chevron Push Back on Fracking Ban Proposal:** America's two biggest oil companies are starting to push back against the fracking ban touted by the leading candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination, which may become one of the most consequential flashpoints for energy markets during the election campaign. Exxon Mobil and Chevron executives spoke out publicly against the proposals for the first time on Friday, saying they would shift profits from crude production from the U.S. to other countries, and may increase prices for consumers while doing nothing to reduce oil demand or greenhouse-gas emissions.

- **Climate Panel Rumor Draws Lawsuit:** Three federal agencies are accused of holding back records related to rumored White House efforts to undermine prior conclusions that climate change poses a threat to national security in a new suit filed by the Environmental Defense Fund in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The Department of the Interior, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and NASA are named as the defendants in the Oct. 31 complaint.