

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Monday, November 8, 2021

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

- Biden returns to the White House from Rehoboth Beach, Del., at 9:40 a.m.
- Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg will participate in the White House briefing at 1 p.m.
- Biden will welcome the NBA champion Milwaukee Bucks to the White House at 2:50 p.m.

### CONGRESS:

- The House plans a committee work week, with no floor activity scheduled. The Senate is also on hiatus for floor work this week.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: SCOTUS to Weigh Dispute Over Kidney Care Coverage:** The Supreme Court will review the scope of federal laws governing how employee health benefit plans must treat people with end-stage kidney disease. The dispute stems from a suit a dialysis provider brought against an Ohio hospital's health plan for treating all dialysis providers as "out-of-network" and reimbursing them at the lowest level rate. Due to a lack of in-network dialysis providers, DaVita argues Marietta Memorial Hospital's employee health plan incentivizes patients to switch to Medicare to avoid paying more for life-sustaining care.
  - The bench will also take a look at cases from a pair of doctors convicted of running pill mills. The question the justices agreed to take up is whether Xiulu Ruan's and Shakeel Kahn's convictions can stand without a trial court considering their good faith defense over whether they "reasonably believed" or "subjectively intended" their prescriptions were within the course of professional practice.
- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Takes Public Works Plan to Voters:** President Biden is seeking sell Americans on the merits of the \$550 billion in new spending even as they face rising prices for fuel, food and housing. The president plans an infrastructure tour over the next several weeks to promote the legislation, including a visit to the Port of Baltimore on Wednesday. While ports have been the focus of supply-chain logjams, Biden also faces immediate pressure this week to decide how to address a surge in gasoline prices.
  - Cabinet secretaries will fan out in the media blitz, one White House official said, traveling all over the country -- to both red and blue states -- and making local and national TV appearances to explain the bill's benefits. Biden and his administration intend to redouble efforts they've undertaken since March to communicate his economic plans and what they'll mean for the American people, the official said.

- **Modern Healthcare: House Bill Calls For Biggest Increase In GME Slots In Decades:** The House's version of President Joe Biden's domestic policy package includes something hospitals have been pushing for for decades: thousands more residency slots paid for by Medicare. If enacted, this would be the biggest expansion of the Graduate Medical Education program in decades and a win for hospital groups that are projecting looming doctor shortages sparked by an aging population and retiring physicians.
- **The New York Times: House Passes \$1 Trillion Infrastructure Bill, Putting Social Policy Bill On Hold:** The House passed a \$1 trillion bill on Friday night to rebuild the country's aging public works system, fund new climate resilience initiatives and expand access to high-speed internet service, giving final approval to a central plank of President Biden's economic agenda after a daylong drama that pitted moderate Democrats against progressives. But an even larger social safety net and climate change bill was back on hold, with a half-dozen moderate-to-conservative Democrats withholding their votes until a nonpartisan analysis could tally its price tag.
- **CNBC: Medicare Has Coverage Gaps Despite Congressional Effort To Expand It:** If Democratic lawmakers get their way, Medicare will start covering hearing services for the first time in the program's history. The coverage, which would take effect in 2023, is included in Democrats' proposed \$1.85 trillion spending bill, dubbed the Build Back Better Act and aimed partly at strengthening the social safety net. The legislative package still needs approval in both the House and Senate before it could be signed into law by President Joe Biden.
- **Bloomberg Government: Lawmakers Say Surprise Billing Rule Not Written Correctly:** Reps. Brad Wenstrup (R-Ohio) and Tom Suozzi (D-N.Y.) led 150 lawmakers in urging secretaries of the Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Labor departments to rewrite a surprise billing interim final rule to more accurately reflect the No Surprises Act. The rule "could incentivize insurance companies to set artificially low payment rates, which would narrow provider networks and jeopardize patient access to care," the lawmakers said. That's "the exact opposite of the goal of the law," they said.