Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE:

- Biden this morning delivers remarks and hosts a virtual Summit for Democracy starting at 8 a.m.
- The president will attend the ceremony at the Capitol for Bob Dole t 10 a.m. and deliver remarks.
- The president will speak at 12:30 p.m. with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to discuss relations with Russia following Biden’s virtual call on Tuesday with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Biden will then speak at 1:45 p.m. with the Bucharest Nine group of NATO allies.
- Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris will meet at 3:30 p.m. with members of the Covid-19 response team to discuss the omicron variant.

CONGRESS:

- The late Sen. Bob Dole, who died on Sunday, will lie in state in the Capitol Rotunda today from noon until 8 p.m. A formal ceremony will be held at 9:45 a.m. A congressional tribute ceremony will be held at 10 a.m.
- The House is in at noon to consider legislation inspired by former President Donald Trump’s administration that would establish additional presidential and executive branch ethics rules.
- The Senate meets at 11:30 a.m. with plans to begin consideration of a measure to allow lawmakers to raise the debt limit and temporarily block cuts to Medicare and other mandatory spending programs.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- The Washington Post: Omicron May Require Fourth Vaccine Dose, Pfizer Says: The new omicron variant could increase the likelihood that people will need a fourth coronavirus vaccine dose earlier than expected, executives at pharmaceutical giant Pfizer said Wednesday. Boosters are likely to help control the variant, according to the company, which said early lab experiments suggest the standard two-dose regimen still provides some protection against severe illness from the variant. Albert Bourla, Pfizer’s chief executive, had projected that a fourth dose might be needed 12 months after a third shot. But he said on CNBC’s “Squawk
Box” that the timeline might need to be moved up. One of the company’s top scientists recently said a fourth shot — possibly one targeting omicron — is likely to be necessary.

- **Crain's Detroit Business: Michigan Medicine Cancels Surgeries In Midst Of COVID Surge**: As of Wednesday, Michigan Medicine has canceled at least 40 surgeries this week as it deals with the latest surge in COVID-19 hospitalizations. The Ann Arbor health system is pulling staff and resources from its surgical teams to aid in the treatment of the 93 COVID-19 inpatients and rising levels of patients in its emergency rooms, administrators told reporters on a media call Wednesday. The administrators held the call as a means to beg the public to get vaccinated.

- **Bloomberg Government: Biomedical Incubator Hearing Planned for 2022, Key Lawmaker Says**: House lawmakers plan to hold a hearing next year on Biden’s plan to set up a new biomedical research agency, the head of the House health panel said yesterday. “I don’t know the date. But there’ll be a hearing,” Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-Calif.), chair of the House Energy and Commerce health subcommittee, told Bloomberg Law before a hearing on turning biomedical research into personalized health care. The signal of support from Eshoo is critical as she leads the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, or ARPA-H. And there are two competing proposals in the same committee to set it up.

- **AP: Nobels For Medicine, Economics Given In California Ceremony**: The 2021 Nobel Prize laureates for medicine and economics received their awards in Southern California on Wednesday during a scaled-down ceremony adapted for pandemic times. Swedish Ambassador Karin Olofsdotter was on hand in Irvine, south of Los Angeles, to award the Nobel for physiology or medicine to David Julius and Ardem Patapoutian and the prize for economic sciences to David Card, Joshua D. Angrist and Guido W. Imbens. Julius, a professor of physiology at the University of California, San Francisco, and Patapoutian, a molecular biologist at Scripps Research in La Jolla, California, were honored for independently discovering key mechanisms of how humans sense heat, cold and other stimuli.

- **Bloomberg Government: Generics Back Teva as Court Mulls New Redo on Drug-Label Case**: Generic drugmakers are lining up behind Teva Pharmaceuticals to tear down a product label ruling they claim jeopardizes their ability to get low-cost drugs to market as the Federal Circuit weighs whether to rehear the case for the third time. A divided U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit panel has twice ruled that Teva’s label on a copycat version of GlaxoSmithKline Plc’s Coreg heart drug led doctors to prescribe the generic for an infringing use. The outcome saddles Teva with a $235 million penalty, and case watchers say the latest ruling discourages generic producers from using routine labeling strategies to bring drugs to consumers for fear of massive financial hits—even more so than the first decision.