

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Wednesday, March 10, 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

- 11am: Press Briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and public health officials
- 12:30pm: Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki and Special Assistant to the President & Coordinator for the Southern Border Ambassador Roberta Jacobson
- 3pm: Biden hosts an event with the CEOs of Johnson & Johnson and Merck

CONGRESS

- U.S. House convenes at 9am
 - House will hold final vote on Biden's stimulus bill after receiving the Senate version Tuesday
- U.S. Senate convenes at 10am, will resume consideration of the nomination of Marcia Fudge to be Secretary of HUD
- Senate will also vote on confirmation of Merrick Garland to be Attorney General and on motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Michael Regan to be Administrator of the EPA

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Stimulus Nears Final Approval:** The House is poised to send the \$1.9 trillion Covid-19 relief plan to President Joe Biden for his signature, providing an economic boost that will last long after \$1,400 stimulus checks start arriving in Americans' accounts this month. With four days until supplemental unemployment benefits begin running out, House Democratic leaders expect passage this morning. The bill provides a template for a potential longer-term expansion of an American social-safety net that has long been much smaller than its European counterparts. Democrats say the near-\$110 billion temporary expansion of the child-tax credit will help cut child poverty in half, while tax forgiveness on jobless benefits and student-debt relief will give help to millions more.
 - Economists this week were upping their projections for growth to incorporate the impact. Morgan Stanley yesterday raised their 2021 forecast for U.S. economic growth to 7.3% from 6.5%, a pace unsurpassed since the Korean War boom in 1951. The OECD the same day more than doubled its own estimate.
 - White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said yesterday that the government won't have the checks -- in the amount of \$1,400 for each individual, phasing down to zero for those earning \$80,000 or more -- printed with Biden's name on them, as the Treasury seeks to accelerate their distribution. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said her department is preparing to send out aid as rapidly as possible. "In the coming days, our Treasury team is going to work to get this aid out as in the quickest way

possible -- and the one that produces the greatest impact," Yellen said yesterday in the text of a speech for a virtual conference organized by the National League of Cities. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that \$1.1 trillion of spending under the relief bill would go out this year, with a further \$459 billion coming in 2022.

- **The Washington Post: Biden Prepares To Mail Checks, But Other Stimulus Challenges Loom:** Congress is set to give the final green light to a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus stimulus package Wednesday, setting in motion another gargantuan political lift: a Washington-wide effort to administer one of the largest economic relief packages in U.S. history. Over the coming weeks, the Biden administration must send another round of one-time checks to millions of families, rethink vast portions of the U.S. tax code and dole out much-needed sums to help cash-strapped Americans, seeking to swiftly blunt an economic crisis that has left millions without jobs and falling further behind financially.
- **Bloomberg Government: Landmark Labor Law Overhaul Passed by House:** The House yesterday passed the most significant overhaul of federal labor law in decades. The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is the top legislative priority for organized labor groups and has the backing of Biden, but the business lobby is seeking to block the bill. Supporters also face a steep challenge overcoming a filibuster in the Senate. The bill was passed by the House on a 225-206 vote. The chamber previously passed the PRO Act last year along mostly party lines.
- **Stat: Is A Leaderless FDA Clamping Down On Drug Reviews?:** Seemingly overnight, the Food and Drug Administration appears to be taking a more risk-averse stance on drug reviews, leaving drug makers confused and their stock prices battered. Acadia Pharmaceuticals said Monday evening that it was notified by the FDA about "deficiencies" in its application for an expanded use for its anti-psychosis drug Nuplazid. The company said the letter from the agency arrived on March 3 without any warning, exactly one month before Acadia was expecting a decision on Nuplazid's approval.
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS Sued in Attempt to Kill Trump-Era Rule:** A California county sued the Department of Health and Human Services in an effort to safeguard regulations for food safety, public health and social services. A "Sunset Rule" proposed by the Trump administration was finalized the day before Biden's inauguration. It set automatic expiration dates for more than 18,000 Health and Human Services regulations, according Democracy Forward, which announced the lawsuit in a statement. "Unless it is immediately halted, millions of Americans, including more than 36 million children, will be hurt by the resulting regulatory chaos, uncertainty, and elimination of key protections," Democracy Forward said in the statement, referring to the rule.