

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, March 29, 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
- 1:30pm: Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris receive a COVID-19 briefing
- 2:10pm: Biden delivers remarks on the COVID-19 response and the state of vaccinations

### CONGRESS

- U.S. House convenes at 10:30am
- U.S. Senate convenes at 11am for pro forma session, adjourned until April 12

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Three Democrats Introduce Public Option for ACA:** Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) and Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), and Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) Friday unveiled a bill to add a publicly operated health insurance option to the Affordable Care Act's individual marketplaces, according to a statement. The measure would "guarantee American consumers access to a stable, low-cost, and high-quality plan" in U.S. insurance marketplaces, according to the statement.
- **Bloomberg Government: Sanders Pushes for Medicare Changes in Infrastructure Bill:** Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) is pushing Biden to use Democrats' next big legislative package to lower the Medicare eligibility age to as low as 55, let the program negotiate drug prices, and expand coverage for dental and hearing, according to a staffer for Sanders. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said last week that Democrats are discussing adding language to Biden's upcoming infrastructure legislation that would let the U.S. negotiate drug prices.
- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Contracts for 18 Million Masks for At-Risk People:** Two U.S. companies will produce some 17.8 million cloth masks under a new government contract as part of the White House plan to send the protective gear to disadvantaged communities that have borne the brunt of the coronavirus. Parkdale Advanced Materials and H.C. Contracting will each make 8.9 million masks for \$20.5 million each, the Defense Logistics Agency said.
- **Stat: FDA Approves First Personalized Cell Therapy For Multiple Myeloma:** The Food and Drug Administration on Friday approved the first personalized cell therapy to treat patients with advanced multiple myeloma. It will be marketed under the brand name Abecma by its makers, Bristol Myers Squibb and Bluebird Bio. Multiple myeloma is a cancer that forms in plasma cells, a type of white blood cell that helps fight infections. In

people with multiple myeloma, malignant plasma cells accumulate in the bone marrow, where they crowd out healthy blood cells, causing tumors, kidney damage, bone destruction, and impaired immune function.

- **CNBC: The U.S. Is In A Delicate Position As Covid Cases Increase Alongside Vaccinations, Experts Warn:** With the possibility of summer barbeques just a few months away, along with the promise of widespread Covid-19 vaccine supply in the U.S. by the end of May, many Americans may be feeling as though the nation has finally turned the corner on the pandemic. But to leading infectious disease experts, the country isn't there yet.
- **Bloomberg Government: U.S. Sees Hitting 240 Million Doses This Week:** The U.S. will have received 240 million doses of vaccines by the end of March, enough to inoculate 130 million people, with Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson all on pace to hit quarterly production targets, Jeff Zients, coronavirus response coordinator for President Joe Biden, said in a briefing on Friday. The Biden administration expects at least 11 million doses from J&J this week, putting the drugmaker on track to achieve their mark of 20 million doses by the end of March.