

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, March 3, 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

- 1:45pm: President Biden holds bipartisan meeting on cancer
- 5pm: President Biden participates in virtual event with the House Democratic Caucus
- 11:50am: Vice President Harris visits woman-owned small business in Alexandria, Va. to discuss pandemic, need for stimulus legislation
- 6pm: Harris swears in Gina Raimondo as Commerce Secretary
- 11:00am: White House Covid-19 response team holds briefing
- 12:30pm: Press Sec. Jen Psaki holds press briefing

### CONGRESS

- U.S. House convenes at 9am
- U.S. Senate convenes at Noon
  - Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer says the chamber will begin work on President Biden's \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill as soon as Wednesday

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **The Washington Post: Schumer: Senate To Move Forward On \$1.9 Trillion Covid Bill And 'We'll Have The Votes':** Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) said the Senate will move forward as soon as Wednesday on President Biden's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief bill and pledged, "We'll have the votes we need to pass the bill." Schumer's comments at a news conference Tuesday came even as moderate Senate Democrats maneuvered to limit some of the expenditures in the bill, over objections from liberals who insisted they'd already made concessions on Biden's first major legislative proposal.
- **NBC News: Obamacare Would Get A Big (And Quiet) Overhaul In The Covid Relief Bill:** The \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package that passed the House on Saturday would make one of the biggest changes to the Affordable Care Act in over a decade, and it could set the stage for a broader overhaul of the health care program – but don't be surprised if you haven't heard much about it. The reforms, which would include temporarily expanding subsidies to purchase insurance and making them available to people of all incomes for the first time, have gotten little attention from either party.
- **Bloomberg Government: Nursing Home Cases, Deaths Plummet:** U.S. nursing homes, the epicenter of the Covid-19 pandemic, have seen an 82% decline in new cases among residents and a 63% drop in deaths since the holiday surge in December 2020, thanks to the mass vaccination effort that has targeted residents and staff at the facilities. The decline, from more than 33,000 new resident cases per week as of Dec. 20, 2020, to just over

6,000 new cases on Feb. 7, 2021, “is getting us to the point of the lowest number of cases since the government started collecting this data clear back in May,” said Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of the American Health Care Association, which represents more than 14,000 for-profit nursing homes.

- **Bloomberg Government: Permanent Medicare Telehealth Expansion Gains Support:** Looser telehealth restrictions for Medicare beneficiaries enacted for the pandemic should be made permanent, the heads of the House Energy and Commerce health panel said. The expansion of telehealth, in which health-care providers treat patients using remote technology, over the past year has proven that many of Medicare’s stricter restrictions on the service should end, Chair Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.) said.
- **Bloomberg Government: Congress Weighs Tech Shield Options:** Lawmakers are taking aim at the controversial law that shields internet platforms including Facebook and Twitter from lawsuits over content posted by users. The measure, Section 230, now faces its biggest reckoning since it was included in the Communications Decency Act of 1996. Calls to revise it grew in the months before the November election and intensified after the deadly attack on Congress by Trump’s loyalists. New measures to redraw Section 230 are expected in the coming weeks.
- **Bloomberg Government: Grassley Files Paperwork to Set Up Re-election Bid:** Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), 87, filed Federal Election Commission paperwork today to set up possible 2022 re-election campaign. Grassley declined to comment on his re-election plans during an interview late yesterday, saying he’d answer the question in September, October, November of this year.
- **AP: Texas And Other States Ease COVID-19 Rules Despite Warnings:** The governors of Michigan, Mississippi and Louisiana likewise eased up on bars, restaurants and other businesses Tuesday, as did the mayor of San Francisco. “Removing statewide mandates does not end personal responsibility,” said Abbott, speaking from a crowded dining room where many of those surrounding him were not wearing masks. “It’s just that now state mandates are no longer needed.”
- **Bloomberg Government: White House Withdraws Tanden’s Nomination:** Biden suffered his first major setback in filling his cabinet yesterday as Neera Tanden withdrew from consideration to lead the Office of Management and Budget after facing opposition from senators over her partisanship. Biden said in a statement that he had accepted Tanden’s request and would find another place for her. “I have the utmost respect for her record of accomplishment, her experience and her counsel, and I look forward to having her serve in a role in my administration,” he said. Tanden, who led the liberal Center for American Progress for nearly a decade, is Biden’s first cabinet-level nominee to fail to reach confirmation, as the Senate slowly considers remaining nominees.