American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Monday, March 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

• 9:50am: Biden receives the President’s Daily Brief
• 10:00am: First Lady Jill Biden delivers remarks at U.S. State Department’s annual International Women of Courage virtual ceremony
  o Secretary of State Antony Blinken hosts
• 11am: press briefing by White House COVID-19 Response Team and public health officials
• 11:30 AM Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki, Co-Chair of the Gender Policy Council and Chief of Staff to the First Lady Julissa Reynoso, and Co-Chair and Executive Director of the Gender Policy Council Jennifer Klein
• 1pm: Biden visits a veterans medical center that is administering COVID-19 vaccines with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough
• 4:20pm: Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin deliver remarks on International Women’s Day

CONGRESS

• U.S. House convenes at noon for morning hour, at 2pm for legislative business
• 10:30am: House Rules Committee prepares the following bills for floor action later in the week: H.R. 842, Protecting the Right to Organize Act of 2021; H.R. 8, Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2021; H.R. 1446, Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2021

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

• Bloomberg Government: Organ Transplant Groups Push to Alter Trump Rule: The transplant medical community is calling on the Biden administration to rework a Trump-era organ procurement rule that they say could be detrimental to the donation process. The rule is designed to make more human organs available for transplant and establishes stricter quality requirements for procurement groups to get federal reimbursements. But it also “injects forced competition” by forcing the groups to “compete for their service area,” a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services says.

• Bloomberg Government: Medicaid Expansion Incentives: The relief bill makes a strong bid to bring Medicaid expansion to the 12 states that haven’t yet allowed working-age adults to become eligible for the program. The bill would cover more than the full cost of expansion for the first two years for any nonexpansion states that come on board, according to Edwin Park, a professor at the McCourt School of Public Policy at
Georgetown University. The federal share after the first two years would be 90%, as with other expansion states, Park said.

- Full expansion in the holdout states could bring health-care coverage to an additional 4 million people, helping reverse a recent upward trend in the number of uninsured in the U.S. The number of uninsured Americans has grown by 2 million since 2016, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Moves to Blunt GOP on Voting Rights Moves**: Biden issued an executive order mandating federal departments and agencies increase efforts to help Americans register to vote, as the White House looks for ways to offset Republican efforts to toughen voting standards. The executive action taken yesterday directs federal facilities to accept requests from states -- which each run their own voter processes -- to become registration sites, and calls for a modernization of the Vote.gov website.

- **CNN: Stimulus Update: House To Vote On Biden's $1.9 Trillion Covid Relief Plan Tuesday**: The House is scheduled to vote Tuesday on the Senate version of President Joe Biden's $1.9 trillion Covid relief bill, a timeline that could see the sweeping legislation signed into law early this week. On Monday evening, the House will vote on the terms for the bill's consideration, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said in a statement, and the chamber will vote to approve the changes made in the Senate the following day.

- **CIDRAP: GAO Spotlights FDA's COVID-Related Drug Inspection Backlog**: In 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was unable to complete more than 1,000 of its drug inspections, putting the quality of drugs sold on the US market at risk, according to a US Government Accountability Office (GAO) testimony report to a House subcommittee yesterday. Concerns over this backlog have been raised by industry stakeholders as the pandemic has continued, and in GAO’s testimony to the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies, it underscores its inspection-related recommendations from January while adding further insights into inspection trends and potential barriers.