

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Thursday, April 22, 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

- President Biden and Vice President Harris deliver remarks at 8am to the Leaders Summit on Climate

### CONGRESS:

- The House will vote today on a bill to designate Washington, D.C. the 51st state.
- Senators are scheduled to vote on a bill to speed up the federal response to hate crimes.
- Senate Republicans are slated to unveil their counteroffer to Biden's \$2.25 trillion infrastructure proposal today at a noon press conference.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Modern Healthcare: Navigators To Get Record-Breaking \$80 Million To Boost ACA Enrollment:** The Biden administration will provide federal marketplace navigators with \$80 million in funding to help people enroll in health coverage during the 2022 open enrollment period, HHS said Wednesday. That's an eightfold increase compared to last year and the largest pot of money ever earmarked for navigators. HHS expects the increase in outreach, education and enrollment assistance to ramp up enrollment in health coverage. "Navigators play a key role in helping us educate consumers about health plan options. Today's announcement builds upon the steps the administration has taken to ensure individuals and families can access quality, affordable health coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic," HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a statement.
- **Bloomberg Government: GOP Senators Free to Seek Earmarks:** Senate Republicans who want earmarks for projects in their states will be free to request them a decade after the practice was ended following a series of scandals. Senate Appropriations ranking Republican Richard Shelby (Ala.) said Senate Republicans at a meeting yesterday decided to keep in place their existing policy, which opposes earmarking funding for pet projects but isn't binding on individual members. "If you don't want earmarks, don't ask for one," Shelby said. "You might not get one. But the old earmark days, they're gone."
  - The practice of letting lawmakers designate home-state projects for funding in the past made it easier to approve annual appropriations bills. It may help ease a path for the transportation portion of Biden's \$2.25 trillion infrastructure-led spending plan, by giving senators the ability to claim specific wins for their states. Momentum had been building for a return to earmarks, with Democrats and Republicans in the House already resuming the practice.
- **Bloomberg Government: Biden Went Big in First 100 Days With Challenges Ahead:** By his 100th day in office on April 29, Biden will have surpassed goals he set for Covid vaccinations and be close to meeting another on reopening schools. He's skirted fault lines

between progressives and centrists and kept his party united. These first few months have gone even more smoothly than Democrats had hoped. But the next 100 days and beyond already look more turbulent. Biden faces a human-rights crisis on the southern border. New coronavirus variants are fueling the pandemic. Biden's \$2.25 trillion infrastructure bill is by no means certain to pass, and the next big bill on the horizon, the American Families Plan, looks like a long shot.

- **Bloomberg Government: CMS Pick Slowed Over Medicaid Fight:** Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) is delaying fast confirmation of Biden's choice to oversee Medicare and Medicaid, according to the senator's spokesperson. Cornyn placed a hold on the nomination of Chiquita Brooks-LaSure to be head of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in response to the Biden administration's decision to revoke a 10-year extension of Texas's Medicaid waiver, approved at the end of the Trump administration.
- **The Washington Post: Biden Coronavirus Vaccine Speech: At The 200 Million Shot Mark, Pushing Businesses Incentivize Vaccination:** President Biden on Wednesday sought to jump-start suddenly slowing vaccinations of Americans against the coronavirus, pressing businesses and nonprofits to give employees paid time off for the shots and touting government funding to underwrite some of the costs of that time. The initiative, designed to encourage millions of unvaccinated people to get immunized, sends one of the strongest signals yet that vaccine demand is emerging as a bigger challenge than supply. It marks a shift from months of long waiting lists and limited opportunities for Americans to get vaccinated. Biden announced Wednesday that the United States will hit 200 million vaccination shots by Thursday, a target he had set out to meet by the end of April.