

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, May 18, 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 will travel to Dearborn, Michigan today to tour the Ford Rouge Electric Vehicle Center.
 - The president will deliver remarks at the facility.

CONGRESS:

- The House is scheduled to consider nine measures under expedited procedures.
- The Senate will resume consideration of a bill to bolster the U.S.'s ability to compete with China.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: 'Cures 2.0' Draft Bill Expected in June:** Draft legislation to update the landmark biomedical innovation law 21st Century Cures will likely come out in early June, lawmakers behind the bill said. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) and Fred Upton (R-Mich.) indicated they want to pass their bill, known as Cures 2.0, by the end of the year, although they acknowledged the pandemic has set back their work. The bill offers a chance for an increasingly divided Congress to pass legislation to remove hurdles to cutting-edge treatments when science is moving at a rapid pace.
- **Bloomberg Government: HHS's Levine Has Packed Agenda:** Rachel Levine has a full plate of health inequities she wants to tackle as the Biden administration's assistant secretary for health, including Covid-19 vaccinations, LGBT health care, HIV, opioid use, and environmental impacts on health. Because of her position as the highest ranking openly transgender official in any administration, she is facing pressure to be a voice for her community and make a real impact on health policy in the next few years. Levine's goals all come back to one message that Biden has made clear: The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed many existing inequities, and his administration will do what it can to fix them.
- **CIDRAP: Plasma From Recovered Patients Found Not Helpful For COVID Hospital Patients:** Convalescent plasma given to hospitalized COVID-19 patients did not improve survival or rates of release from the hospital within 28 days, need for invasive mechanical ventilation, or death, according to the most recent findings of the Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy (RECOVERY) trial in the United Kingdom.
- **Bloomberg Government: Medical Supply Chain:** The president's authority to use the Defense Production Act to bolster the supply chain for critical medical supplies would be clarified under H.R. 3146.

- Bloomberg Government: Defense Bill Could Be Delayed Until September:** The House Armed Services Committee may delay writing the fiscal 2022 defense authorization bill until September due to other legislation taking priority and Biden's budget coming later than normal, congressional aides said. House leaders have indicated that floor time would be taken up by other bills, according to the aides, who asked not to be named because the schedule isn't confirmed.
- Modern Healthcare: HHS Warns Drugmakers That Won't Give 340B Discounts To Contract Pharmacies:** HHS' Health Resources and Services Administration on Monday sent letters to six drugmakers, warning them that they could face steep fines if they don't discount drug prices for pharmacies that contract with 340B providers. Pharmaceutical companies started aggressively cracking down on 340B drug discounts through contract pharmacies and demanding more data from healthcare providers last summer. They have been seemingly testing how far they could challenge HRSA guidance that allows 340B providers to receive discounts while working with multiple contract pharmacies. That led to several lawsuits from community health centers and hospital groups.
- Bloomberg Government: Vote on Repealing Worker Bias Rule This Week:** The Senate will vote this week on whether to overturn a rule on how employers can resolve workplace bias claims, its third effort to kill a regulation from Trump's administration. A resolution to repeal the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission rule is first on the Senate's to-do list for this week, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said yesterday.
- Bloomberg Government: CDC Deputy Director Set to Retire in Second High-Profile Exit:** A top-ranking Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official will retire this summer, the second member of the agency's leadership to announce a departure in a month as controversy has swirled around its recommendations. CDC principal deputy director Anne Schuchat's departure come amid criticism of the agency's communications and policy changes in response to emerging science on how the virus spreads through aerosols and when wearing masks is needed.
- Modern Healthcare: Biden Lifting Green Card Insurance Requirements Could Boost ACA, Analysts Say:** President Joe Biden on Friday rescinded a Trump-era rule that required green card applicants to provide proof of health insurance, or evidence they could pay for it, before entering the country, saying the move does not advance the interests of the U.S. "My administration is committed to expanding access to quality, affordable healthcare," Biden said in a statement. "We can achieve that objective, however, without barring the entry of noncitizens who seek to immigrate lawfully to this country but who lack significant financial means or have not purchased health insurance coverage."
- NBC News: States Are Turning Away Unemployment Aid. Workers Fear Choice Between Health And A Paycheck:** For Kelvin Wade, 34, the pandemic is far from over. He recently marked the anniversary of his mother's death from Covid-19, a loss that still feels fresh. He and his wife, D'Anna, 23, who live in Ridgeland, Mississippi, fear for the safety of their 15-month-old daughter, so Wade goes out on errands alone, hoping to reduce the family's exposure. The couple is hesitant to get vaccinated, worried that the shots could bring additional risks. And more than a year after the coronavirus first began shuttering businesses and displacing people from their jobs, both are still out of work.