

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, May 19, 2020

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

- 9am: Vice President Mike Pence, Treasury Sec. Steven Mnuchin meet with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy
- 10:30am: Pence chairs National Space Council meeting
- 11am: President Trump delivers remarks on supporting farmers, food supply chain
- 3pm: Trump holds cabinet meeting

### CONGRESS

- Senate meets at 10am; resumes consideration of judicial nominees. Holds weekly policy lunches from approx. noon to 2:15pm
- House holds pro forma session
- 10:45am: House Speaker Pelosi holds ceremonial swearing in for Representatives-elect Tom Tiffany and Mike Garcia

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **The Wall Street Journal: U.S. Offers Guide For Reopening Nursing Homes:** The recommendations from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, like a previous draft version reported by The Wall Street Journal, call for a multiphase regimen, mirroring the three-phase "Opening Up America Again" guidelines for states that were issued by the Trump administration in April. The earlier draft drew concern from industry officials who felt it was too vague and included no specific requirements for coronavirus testing. The final version says a facility should have a testing plan in place before beginning reopening phases. The document suggests that the plan involve initial testing of all residents and staff, and it offers other testing recommendations as a facility moves through various stages of reopening.
- **Senators Unveil Bipartisan Plan to Aid States:** A bipartisan group of senators unveiled a bill yesterday that would establish a \$500 billion account to aid state and local governments in coping with the impact of the coronavirus crisis. Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) first unveiled plans for a relief package for state and local governments last month. They have added on two more Republicans to the effort: Sens. Cindy Hyde-Smith (Miss.) and Susan Collins (Maine) with Sens. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Cory Booker (D-N.J.) as co-sponsors.
  - Under the legislation, the aid would be divided into three tranches and handed out according to population, infection rates, and revenue losses. Their bill does not have a population requirement, meaning municipalities of any size can use the funds it makes available. All states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico would

- receive a minimum of \$2 billion under the plan.
  - A companion measure has been unveiled in the House by Reps. Mikie Sherrill (D-N.J.) and Peter King (R-N.Y.), Daniel Flatley reports.
- **The Wall Street Journal: Moderna Says Initial Covid-19 Vaccine Results Are Positive:** Moderna's vaccine is among several front-runners that have emerged from the more than 100 coronavirus vaccines in development world-wide. At least seven other vaccines have started human testing, and several companies including Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer Inc. and AstraZeneca PLC are bulking up manufacturing capacity to make doses to meet global demand if vaccines they or their partners are developing prove successful. The early data suggest Moderna's vaccine, code-named mRNA-1273, "has a very good chance to provide protection" from Covid-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, Moderna Chief Executive Stephane Bancel said in an interview.
- **Reuters: Exclusive: CDC Plans Sweeping COVID-19 Antibody Study In 25 Metropolitan Areas:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plans a nationwide study of up to 325,000 people to track how the new coronavirus is spreading across the country into next year and beyond, a CDC spokeswoman and researchers conducting the effort told Reuters.
- **Trump Threatens WHO With Permanent Cutoff of U.S. Funds:** Trump escalated his threats against the World Health Organization over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, saying he would permanently cut U.S. funding if it does not make sweeping reforms. In a four-page letter detailing his many grievances with the WHO, Trump called on the group to "demonstrate independence from China," renewing a complaint that led him in April to temporarily suspend U.S. funding. He posted the letter late Monday on Twitter.
  - "If the World Health Organization does not commit to major substantive improvements within the next 30 days, I will make my temporary freeze of United States funding to the World Health Organization permanent and reconsider our membership in the organization," Trump wrote to Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.
- **NPR: Community Health Centers Struggling As Fewer People Seek Care During Pandemic:** Community health centers had been at the front lines of health care in the nation's poorest neighborhoods even before the spread of the coronavirus. But in the midst of the pandemic, patients who fear deportation or infection are forcing many centers to close. Public health officials worry that the populations that these centers serve – mostly people with low incomes and immigrants – aren't getting proper health care and testing, may be unable to quarantine themselves and could contribute to spreading the coronavirus to the wider population.