

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Thursday, June 11, 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

- President Trump travels to Dallas, Texas for a roundtable talk with religious leaders, law enforcement officials and small business owners, and later will attend a campaign fundraiser
 - NOTE: Trump intends to announce a plan for nation's recovery, will tout previous actions aimed at helping black Americans, White House has said
 - Texas on Wednesday reported 2,504 new coronavirus cases, its highest one-day total since the pandemic emerged
- 12:25pm: Trump departs White House, arrives in Dallas 3:30pm
 - 4pm: Trump participates in a roundtable at Gateway Church Dallas
 - 6:30pm: Trump delivers remarks at fundraiser at private residence
 - 8pm: Trump departs Dallas for his golf resort in Bedminster, New Jersey, where he'll arrive at 11:20pm ET

CONGRESS

- Senate meets at 10am; resumes consideration of H.R. 1597, vehicle for Great American Outdoors Act with roll call votes possible
- 10am: Senate Judiciary Committee considers subpoenas for government officials in the Russia investigation

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Second Virus Wave Seen Emerging:** A second wave of coronavirus cases is emerging in the U.S., raising alarms as new infections push the overall count past 2 million Americans.
 - Texas yesterday reported 2,504 new cases of Covid-19, the highest single-day total since the pandemic emerged. A month into its own reopening, Florida this week found 8,553 new confirmed cases, the most of any seven-day period. California's hospitalizations are at their highest in a month and have risen nine of the past 10 days.
 - A fresh onslaught of the novel coronavirus is bringing challenges for residents and the economy in pockets across the nation. The localized surges concern experts, even as they're masked by the country's overall case count, which early this week rose by just under 1%, the smallest increase since March.

- **Bloomberg Government: Lawmakers Debate New Safeguards for Workers:** House Democrats used a hearing on “essential workers” to push for passage of labor-focused proposals, including a bill to pay increased benefits to front-line workers who contract the coronavirus, while Republicans called for continued efforts to open up schools and businesses. Essential workers such as nurses and grocery store clerks who aren’t able to work from home are being overlooked in the rush to reopen the country, House Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) said. “We do not all face the risks of the crisis equally.”

 - Committee Democrats pressed the Senate to take up a House-passed bill that would force the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue rules mandating employers take actions to protect workers from Covid-19 exposure in the workplace. They also called on the House to pass a proposal from Maloney that would pay benefits to essential employees suffering from the disease. That legislation was referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

- **The Hill: Final Testing Stage For Potential Coronavirus Vaccine Set To Begin In July:** The final testing stage for a potential coronavirus vaccine developed by Moderna is set to begin in July, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) confirmed to The Hill on Wednesday. John Mascola, the director of the vaccine research center at NIAID, told The Wall Street Journal that the trials will involve about 30,000 people at more than 50 sites, which will mostly be within the U.S. The third phase of testing for potential vaccines developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca will begin in August while the last trials for one developed by Johnson & Johnson will start in September, NIAID confirmed to The Hill.

- **Bloomberg Government: Medical Innovation Bill’s Authors Cite Current Crisis:** A bipartisan duo in the House are pitching congressional leaders on including new provisions to bolster medical research and disease surveillance into the next pandemic-response bill. Rep. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) said she and Fred Upton (R-Mich) are pushing to get some provisions related to sharing health data – and patient rights to that data – as well as improving virus surveillance tools cleared in larger legislation that could get signed into law this year.

- **Reuters: U.S. FDA Commissioner Says Agency Seeks Fast Review Of COVID-19 Products:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is seeking to review treatments and tests for COVID-19 “as fast as we can” for emergency clearance, with the priority on those using high-level science, the agency’s commissioner said on Wednesday. The FDA aims to expedite products with the greatest chance of making it through the clinical trial process and eventually helping people, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn said during a conference held by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization.

- **Bloomberg Government: Nominations:** Trump has tapped Anthony Tata, a retired Army brigadier general and occasional Fox News commentator, to be the next undersecretary of policy for the Defense Department. Tata would replace John Rood at DOD if confirmed by the Senate. Rood was ousted in February after playing a minor but important role in Trump’s impeachment saga.

 - Trump also announced his intent to appoint David E. Richardson to be join the Department of Homeland Security as assistant secretary for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction.

- **Bloomberg Government: Assisted-Living Centers Get Relief for First Time:** Assisted-living facilities got a much-needed hand from the federal government yesterday, when – for the first time – some were given access to stimulus that was previously restricted largely to nursing homes. The Health and Human Services program set aside \$15 billion for providers participating in state programs like Medicaid, and haven't received any relief yet. That opens a window to some assisted-living centers, which have been shut out of previous rounds since their residents don't rely on the federal Medicare program as many nursing homes do.