

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

## Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, June 2, 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

- 11am: President Trump, first lady Melania Trump depart White House en route to Saint John Paul II National Shrine
- 11:20am: Trump visits National Shrine
- 12:15pm: Back at White House, Trump signs exec. order on international religious freedom
- 2:30pm: Trump receives intelligence briefing
- 4pm: Trump meets with HHS Sec. Alex Azar in Oval Office

#### CONGRESS

- Senate meets at 10am, resumes consideration of nomination of Victor Mercado to be an asst. sec. of Defense, also set to consider nomination of Brian Miller to be special inspector general for pandemic recovery
- 10am: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi holds bill enrollment photo opportunity for Uighur human rights bill
- 10am: Senate Judiciary Committee holds hearing on best practices for incarceration during Covid-19

### Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Health-Care Small Businesses Are Top U.S. Relief Loan Recipients:** Small businesses in the U.S. health-care and social-assistance industry have emerged as the top recipients of federal coronavirus relief loans, even as the net amount of approved funding in the program continues to decline amid loan cancellations. The Small Business Administration released a report yesterday of Paycheck Protection Program totals through May 30 with loan approvals by industry for the first time since the first round of funding ended on April 16.
- **Bloomberg Government: Stimulus Bill Would Add \$3.5 Trillion:** The latest House-passed stimulus measure would add about \$3.5 trillion to the deficit over the next 10 years, according to a report by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. The section of the Heroes Act that would provide another round of \$1,200 checks would cost \$557 billion, the study said. Extending boosted unemployment insurance through January 2021 would cost \$437 billion, and the higher education provisions would cost \$169 billion, according to CBO.
- **The Washington Post: Lawmakers To Unveil Bipartisan Privacy Bill To Regulate**

**Contact-Tracing Apps:** Senate lawmakers plan to unveil a bipartisan bill on Monday that would regulate contact-tracing and exposure-notification apps, seeking to ensure new digital tools meant to combat the coronavirus don't come at the expense of users' privacy. The proposal, called the "Exposure Notification Privacy Act," would erect federal guardrails around Silicon Valley's nascent efforts to track people's movements and alert them whenever they come in close contact with someone who has tested positive for covid-19.

- **Bloomberg Government: Drug Price Measure Said Still Alive:** Senate Finance Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) said he intends to push for a vote this year on a measure that would limit price hikes of drugs, even as pharmaceutical companies race to find treatments and vaccines for Covid-19. The drugmaking sector has been pouring resources into researching new therapies as the disease wreaks havoc on public health and the economy. That's helped quiet a long-running debate over rising prescription costs.
  - "There's no better time to address this issue," said Grassley, a co-sponsor of the drug-price legislation, in an interview yesterday. He cited a need to prepare for future pandemics and to keep "bad actors" in the drug industry "from hiking prices astronomically" in the next health crisis. If the measure fails to pass, Grassley said he's worried drugmakers will charge "whatever they want to" for Covid-19 drugs. "It will be the Wild West."
  - As drugmakers keep up efforts to find a coronavirus vaccine and treatment, governments and other research funders may be missing an opportunity to help speed the development of coronavirus vaccines and treatments by not insisting the drug companies share intellectual property, research data, and other information, watchdogs and patient advocates argue.
- **NPR: Nearly 26,000 Nursing Home Residents Have Died From COVID-19, Federal Data Show:** CMS also announced Monday that it will be stepping up fines for nursing homes that fail to sufficiently control infections. Nursing homes that have previously been cited for lax infection control could receive fines ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000.
- **The Washington Post: Coronavirus Will Cost U.S. Economy \$8 Trillion Through 2030, CBO Says:** The stark illustration of the pandemic's potential economic impact comes one week after White House officials confirmed they would not release their own updated projections this summer in their annual "mid-session" budget review. The pandemic will hamper U.S. economic growth by reducing the amount of consumer spending and closing numerous businesses, the CBO said. Part of the impact will be mitigated by the more than \$2 trillion the federal government has already approved in emergency spending for households and businesses.