

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, June 25, 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

- Biden at 1:30 p.m. will sign legislation to designate the National Pulse Memorial, followed by remarks to commemorate LGBTQ+ Pride Month.
- At 3:30 p.m., Biden will welcome Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, the chairman of the country's reconciliation council, to the White House.
- Biden will leave for Camp David at 5:15 p.m., according to the White House schedule.

CONGRESS:

- The House plans to vote on a resolution to reinstate 2016 limits on methane emissions from oil and gas production.
- The House Appropriations Agriculture-FDA and Military Construction-VA subcommittees are scheduled to mark up their fiscal 2022 bills.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- Bloomberg Government: Senate Bill Requires Price Transparency in Drug Ads: Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and Angus King (I-Maine) introduced a measure that would require cost disclosures on advertisements for prescription drugs “to empower patients and reduce spending on medications,” according to a statement. The trio cited a Government Accountability Office report that said direct-to-consumer drug ads “contribute to an enormous amount of Medicare costs.”
- **Modern Healthcare: Democrats Propose \$400 Billion Medicaid Boost For Home Care:** Congressional Democrats on Thursday unveiled a bill that would significantly expand access to services that help seniors and people with disabilities receive care in their homes and communities, following up on President Joe Biden's demands for such an investment in an infrastructure bill. The proposal, sponsored by Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-Mich.) and high-ranking House and Senate Democrats, including Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), would offer increased Medicaid funding for states offering home- and community-based services (HCBS) if they agree to certain conditions. Democrats are planning to include the proposal in a forthcoming budget bill that only needs 50 votes to pass the Senate.

- **Bloomberg Government: Diagnostics Authority to Fall to FDA in Bill:** The FDA would reclaim some of its ability to oversee diagnostic tests developed in a single laboratory under a bipartisan measure unveiled yesterday. The measure, titled the “VALID Act,” aims to resolve an ongoing debate about the agency’s authority over lab-developed diagnostics, an uncertainty the Trump administration contributed to last year when it allowed more tests to hit the market without FDA review.
- **Bloomberg Government: High-Ranking HHS Nominees Confirmed:** Two high-level nominees for the Department of Health and Human Services were confirmed yesterday by the Senate. Dawn O’Connell will serve as assistant secretary for preparedness and response, and Miriam Delphin-Rittmon as assistant secretary for mental health and substance use.
- **The Wall Street Journal: Biden, Senators Agree To Roughly \$1 Trillion Infrastructure Plan:** President Biden and a group of 10 centrist senators agreed to a roughly \$1 trillion infrastructure plan Thursday, securing a long-sought bipartisan deal that lawmakers and the White House will now attempt to shepherd through Congress alongside a broader package sought by Democrats. Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders said that advancing the deal on transportation, water and broadband infrastructure will hinge on the passage of more elements of Mr. Biden’s \$4 trillion economic agenda. The two-track process sets up weeks of delicate negotiations to gather support for both the bipartisan plan and a separate Democratic proposal, a challenging task in the 50-50 Senate and the narrowly Democratic-controlled House.
- **Bloomberg Government: House Sets Appropriations Markups:** The House Appropriations Committee announced the schedule for markups of the fiscal 2022 spending bills. The Agriculture-FDA subcommittee will consider its bill today. The subcommittee yesterday unveiled the bill, which would give the FDA almost \$3.5 billion in discretionary funds, an increase of \$257 million from fiscal 2021 levels.
- **Bloomberg Government: House Panel Hearing Eyes Health Data Infrastructure:** Many of the bills considered in yesterday’s House Energy and Commerce hearing focused on strengthening data infrastructure and standardizing health data collection. “Data doesn’t happen in a vacuum, they need systems,” Karen DeSalvo, Chief Health Officer at Google Health and a witness at yesterday’s hearing, said. States need to refresh their IT and security systems often, meaning better data infrastructure requires long-term commitment.
 - Lawmakers pushed for collecting better data on new coronavirus variants and societal issues that affect health like transportation accessibility. Other bills with Democratic support pushed for money to establish programs to address systemic racism or maternal mortality. While Republicans generally agreed for stronger data collection infrastructure, Reps. Brett Guthrie (R-Ky.) and Neal Dunn (R-Fla.) were wary of spending more money without first analyzing how past funds were used.