Schedules: White House and Congress

WHITE HOUSE

- President Biden does not have any public events scheduled.

CONGRESS:

- The Senate plans to vote on two judicial nominations for U.S. district courts before resuming consideration of the China competition bill.
- Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) plans a vote later today on whether the chamber will take up legislation to close the gender wage gap. All 50 senators who caucus with Democrats have signed on as co-sponsors to the Paycheck Fairness Act, but the bill needs support from at least 10 Republicans to make it to the floor for a vote. The legislation would bar employers from using wage history to set workers’ salaries and prohibit retaliation against employees who discuss pay, among other measures.
- The House is conducting committee business only this week.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Pallone Wants H.R. 3 in Biden Plan:** The head of the House Energy and Commerce Committee plans to attach a bill to empower the government to negotiate with drugmakers to a larger economic and jobs plan. Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) told reporters he hopes to pass his party’s signature drug pricing bill (H.R. 3) as part of a major legislative package this year. “We would like to attach it to that larger jobs bill and that’s what I’ll do when that bill moves,” Pallone said on a call with reporters.
  - Pallone pushed back on the idea that moderate Democrats will oppose the legislation, saying he thinks nearly every member his caucus will support the bill. “The votes are clearly there to have the government negotiate prices,” he said. House Democrats on May 10 sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) laying out their concerns with H.R. 3. Pallone said he has spoken with some of those Democrats and expects most will back his drug pricing bill.

- **KHN: Kidney Experts Say It’s Time To Remove Race From Medical Algorithms. Doing So Is Complicated:** Alphonso Harried recently came across a newspaper clipping about his grandfather receiving his 1,000th dialysis treatment. His grandfather later died — at a dialysis center — as did his uncle, both from kidney disease. “And that comes in my mind, on my weak days: ‘Are you going to pass away just like they did?’” said Harried, 46, who also has the disease. He doesn’t like to dwell on that. He has gigs to play as a musician, a ministry to run with his wife and kids to protect as a school security guard.
- **Bloomberg Government: Medicare Payment Model Review Aims For Equity**: A strategic review of Medicare payment models will look to reshape their future development and implementation to better address issues of health disparities and equity, Liz Fowler, director of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, said yesterday. The CMMI develops and evaluates Medicare alternative payment models to test new reimbursement formulas that create incentives and reward providers for delivering cost-effective care that improves patient outcomes.

- **Stat: Apple Announces New Feature To Share Health Data With Doctors**: Apple is making it easier than ever for users to make the most of the mountains of health data already in the palm of their hands. At its annual technology showcase known as the Worldwide Developers Conference on Monday, Apple revealed a new feature for users who have opted to share their medical records on their devices. Users can now choose the types of information they would like to share — such as an elevated cholesterol level or their physical activity history — and identify specific people to send it to, such as family members or clinicians.

- **Bloomberg: Gangrene, Hearing Loss Show Delta Variant May Be More Severe**: The coronavirus variant driving India’s devastating Covid-19 second wave is the most infectious to emerge so far. Doctors now want to know if it’s also more severe. Hearing impairment, severe gastric upsets and blood clots leading to gangrene, symptoms not typically seen in Covid patients, have been linked by doctors in India to the so-called delta variant. In England and Scotland, early evidence suggests the strain -- which is also now dominant there -- carries a higher risk of hospitalization.

- **Bloomberg Government: Nominations**: The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee will hold a nomination hearing for Dawn O’Connell to be assistant secretary for preparedness and response and Miriam Delphin-Rittmon to be assistant secretary for mental health and substance use, both within the Health and Human Services Department.