

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Thursday, July 15, 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

- 12:30 p.m. – Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jen Psaki
- 2:30 p.m. – President Biden departs the White House en route to Camp David

CONGRESS:

- The House Appropriations Committee meets today to mark up the fiscal 2022 Energy and Water Development and Transportation-HUD appropriations bills.

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Medicaid Cash, Drug Recovery Bills Sail Through Panel:**
Lawmakers took the first step toward extending Medicaid funding for people in Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories before financial support expires this fall. The House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Health Subcommittee approved H.R. 4406 by unanimous voice vote and now heads to the full committee for consideration. It was among 18 other approved bills, ranging from resources for substance use recovery to better education on vaccines.
 - H.R. 4406 would mark the longest Medicaid funding extension for U.S. territories since Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010, Energy and Commerce Chair Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) said. It would extend funding for five years for Puerto Rico and eight years for American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Pallone said he supports the bill but that he also has his eye on an eventual “permanent funding decision.”
 - The subcommittee also approved five measures related to substance use prevention and recovery. The pandemic exacerbated an already-surging opioid crisis. Drug overdose deaths rose 30% in 2020, up to 93,331, according to data released Wednesday by the CDC. One bill would seek to regulate the distribution of controlled substances, and another would declare methamphetamine an “emerging drug threat,” and require an emerging threat response plan for the drug.
- **Modern Healthcare: Key House Committee Approves \$120 Billion Health Spending Bill:** A spending bill that would give a 24% funding boost to HHS healthcare research, public health preparedness and workforce training programs cleared the House Appropriations Committee Thursday. HHS would get \$120 billion in the bill, a significant increase compared to the the budgets approved during President Donald Trump's administration. The funding measure still must pass the House and Senate.

- **Bloomberg Government: Pelosi Says House Will Tweak Senate Budget:** Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said the House will “realign” some of the priorities in the \$3.5 trillion Senate Democrat budget blueprint to expand the proposal’s social and environmental programs. “Many of the priorities of the House are already in the bill. The question is the top line,” she said at an event in Los Angeles, “How we stay under the top line, as we perhaps realign some of those priorities.”
- **Bloomberg Government: Home Health Agencies Fight Medicare Cut:** Home health agencies want the Biden administration to reconsider a proposal that would cut their Medicare payment rate by nearly 4.4% for a third straight year in 2022. The “behavior assumption adjustment” in the proposed Home Health Prospective Payment System rule would lower Medicare payments, on the “assumption” home health agencies would alter billing activity to maximize Patient-Driven Groupings Model reimbursements.