

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, August 7, 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 in Bedminster, N.J.; has no public events scheduled
- VP Mike Pence has no public events scheduled

### CONGRESS

- House, Senate not in session
- White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, Treasury Sec. Steven Mnuchin say they plan to call House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer today to determine if it makes sense to meet on virus relief package

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Stat: Trump To Order Government To Buy Certain Drugs Solely From U.S. Factories:** President Trump signed an executive order Thursday directing the federal government to buy certain drugs solely from American factories. The so-called “Buy American” order could represent a seismic shakeup of the drug industry: No one knows exactly how much of the American drug supply chain is produced abroad, but some experts insist up to 90% of critical generic drugs are made at least partially abroad.
- **Bloomberg Government: Tens of Billions Sought for States’ Testing Efforts:** Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) and Tina Smith (D-Minn.) yesterday unveiled a bipartisan bill to provide states resources to increase testing and allow them to “enter interstate compacts to maximize efforts to eliminate the spread of Covid-19.” The bill sets aside \$25 billion to buy tests and supplies, and it “authorizes states to enter into interstate compacts” to assist them to overcome supply chain challenges.
- **Bloomberg Government: Medicare Urged to Improve Nursing Home Oversight:** The Medicare agency should improve its oversight of nursing homes’ compliance with daily staffing requirements, a government watchdog agency said after it found hundreds of facilities didn’t meet mandatory levels of manpower for several weeks in 2018. “This raises concerns that some nursing homes may not have fully met their residents’ needs in 2018,” the HHS Office of Inspector General said in a report released yesterday.
- **Bloomberg Government: Wyden Says Hospitals Should Be Allowed to Fix Ventilators:** Hospitals should be able to fix the breathing machines needed for Covid-19 patients even if those repairs violate manufacturer contracts, Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) said. Wyden unveiled legislation that would cut barriers that manufacturers levy on hospitals seeking

to quickly repair machines in-house or via third-party repair firms. "It's a racket," Wyden told reporters.

- **Bloomberg Government: Senate Passes Alzheimer's-Related Bill:** The Senate yesterday passed by unanimous consent S. 3703, which would amend the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act to aim to prevent the abuse of elders and individuals with certain dementias, such as Alzheimer's disease.
- **Bloomberg Government: Patients in AIDS Program Call for Testing Funds:** Patients need government- subsidized HIV testing and doctor's visits if they participate in a free prevention program, the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS said yesterday. The HIV/ AIDS program launched in December to give 200,000 uninsured patients access to Gilead's Truvada, a daily pill that can help reduce the risk of contracting HIV. The free distribution of the drug is a cornerstone of the Trump administration's initiative to reduce HIV infections.
- **The Washington Post: State Department Lifts Blanket International Travel Advisory After Nearly Five Months:** The State Department lifted its blanket international travel advisory Thursday, almost five months after first urging Americans against overseas travel due to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead, the department will revert to issuing recommendations on a country-specific basis. The department cited "health and safety conditions improving in some countries and potentially deteriorating in others" in its decision to alter the advisory system and said the change in method will allow travelers to make "informed decisions" based on the situation in specific countries.