

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, September 1, 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 will receive his daily brief at 10 a.m.
- Biden hosts Zelenskiy at the White House at 2 p.m.
- Biden will receive a weekly economic briefing at 4:30 p.m. He will also receive regular briefings from the homeland security team on the effects of Hurricane Ida.

### CONGRESS:

- Out of Session

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **New York Times: Another Hidden Covid Risk: Lingering Kidney Problems:** Since the beginning of the pandemic, doctors have found that people who become very ill with Covid-19 often experience kidney problems, not just the lung impairments that are the hallmark of the illness. Now, a large study suggests that kidney issues can last for months after patients recover from the initial infection, and may lead to a serious lifelong reduction of kidney function in some patients. The study, published Wednesday in the Journal of the American Society of Nephrology, found that the sicker Covid patients were initially, the more likely they were to experience lingering kidney damage
- **Bloomberg Government: Travel Nurses Offered Up to \$8,000 Weekly:** With economic reopenings and labor scarcities, all kinds of U.S. workers have been getting pay raises. Some of the largest are going to a group on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19: travel nurses. There are 30,000 open spots for travel nurses nationwide, according to SimpliFi, a health-care staffing firm. That's up 30% from last winter's peak, and climbing. Salaries have climbed too, with rates up to \$8,000 a week for a three-month assignment.
- **Bloomberg Government: Pandemic's Impact on Medicare Trust Fund Seen as Limited:** The Covid-19 pandemic doesn't appear to have had an outsized effect on the trust fund that pays Medicare's inpatient hospital costs. Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund will be able to pay full benefits until 2026, the same as the last two year's projection, despite a presumed decline in payroll tax revenue due to Covid-related layoffs, a federal report found. It's the first to detail the pandemic's impacts on Medicare's finances.

- **Bloomberg Government: Hospitals Lose Fight on Medicare Supplemental Pay:** Hospitals that treat a large number of lower-income patients lost a bid to increase their Medicare supplemental payments because they can't sue to change a method for calculating the amount, a federal court said. The Medicare Act specifically bars administrative and court review of the methodology that HHS uses when calculating the disproportionate share payments, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia stated.
  
- **Bloomberg Government: Capital-Gains Tax Hike Exposes Democratic Divisions:** Democrats on the House committee in charge of turning Joe Biden's tax plan into legislation are at odds over how high to increase levies on investment gains, a key part of the president's agenda. Most House Ways and Means Democrats support Biden's plan to raise the capital gains rate on those earning above \$1 million to 39.6% from 20%, to make it equal with president's proposal for the top rate on income, according to a lawmaker and a House aide familiar with the talks. About a third of Democrats on the panel, however, are advocating for a lower rate on investments, potentially around 28%, according to the people, who requested anonymity because the discussions are private.
  
- **Bloomberg Government: Republicans Seek Midterm Advantage From Withdrawal:** America's withdrawal from Afghanistan is already playing a role in Republican efforts to win back control of the House and Senate, with GOP campaign committees highlighting news coverage of the chaotic scenes at the Kabul airport in videos and other messaging. It's the latest issue Republicans are labeling a Joe Biden crisis, along with a surge in illegal border crossings, inflation risks due to increased government spending, and high fuel prices.
  - Republicans are hammering on these problems and seeking to hang the president's problems around the necks of congressional Democrats, who are clinging to slim majorities in both chambers. But it isn't clear to strategists in either party whether voters will be focused on these issues when they go to the polls next year, rather than economic and health care issues touted by Democrats.