

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update - Tuesday, September 15, 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

- 10:30am: President Trump hosts Bahrain minister of foreign affairs at White House; holds bilateral meeting at 10:35am
- 10:55am: Trump welcomes UAE's minister of foreign affairs, holds bilateral meeting at 11am
- 11:20am: Trump welcomes Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu to White House, holds meeting at 11:25am
- Noon: Trump, first lady participate in signing of Abraham Accords
- 12:45pm: Leaders hold working lunch in state dining room
- Trump departs White House at 3:25pm for Philadelphia
- 5:30pm: Trump participates in ABC News Town Hall event in Philadelphia; arrives back at White House at 8:05pm

CONGRESS

- Senate meets at 10am; resumes consideration of judicial nominees
- House meets at 9am; first votes expected 11:30-1pm; set to consider H.R. 2639, a measure relating to schools and diversity

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Drug Pricing Advocates Launch Ad Campaign:** A drug pricing-advocacy group backed by billionaire former hedge fund managers will launch a seven-figure ad campaign aimed at bolstering candidates of both parties who back prescription drug bills. The spots by Patients for Affordable Drugs Action will air in 15 states, including states with battleground races such as Virginia, Montana, Minnesota, Iowa, and Georgia, the group will announce this week.
 - The ads are likely to help some incumbents in tough races on both sides of the aisle who have supported major drug pricing measures this Congress, from Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), who backed a bipartisan Senate bill (S. 2543) the group favors, to Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-Va.), who voted for a bill (H.R. 3) to provide the government the power to force drugmakers to lower their prices.
- **Bloomberg Government: Pandemic Seen Accelerating Automation:** The coronavirus pandemic has the potential to permanently replace some humans with machines, according to a new study yesterday by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Layoffs have been higher among workers in sectors that can be automated, which increases the risk those jobs will become permanently obsolete, according to the study by economists Lei Ding and Julieth Saenz Molina. And at the same time, the spread of Covid-19 has accelerated automation in industries that have been hit hard by the illness or that don't

permit remote work.

- **Bloomberg Government: Critics' Pressure Causes HHS to Reverse Course on Medicaid Rule:** A proposed federal rule aimed at reining in Medicaid payments was withdrawn in response to pushback from health providers and states, Seema Verma, administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, announced yesterday. The proposed Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule was designed to require greater transparency and accountability from state Medicaid programs, especially with regard to “supplemental payments,” which accounted for \$50 billion in Medicaid spending as recently as 2016.
- **The Hill: Trump Order On Drug Prices Faces Long Road To Finish Line:** President Trump is seeking a preelection boost on a top issue for voters – lowering drug prices – but there are doubts about when and if his latest move will bring down costs for patients. Trump signed a long-awaited executive order Sunday that aims to lower the amount Medicare pays for many drugs by tying the cost to the price tag in other developed countries. While the move could significantly cut the price for certain drugs, the timing of Trump’s action means implementation is unlikely before Election Day.
- **Becker's Hospital Review: CMS Scraps Medicaid Fiscal Responsibility Rule:** CMS has withdrawn its proposed Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule, Administrator Seema Verma tweeted Sept. 14. CMS issued the proposed Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule last November. The rule aimed to promote transparency and fiscal integrity by establishing new reporting requirements for state supplemental payments to Medicaid providers. In mid-August, some hospital associations called on CMS to withdraw the rule, arguing that it could exacerbate the challenges hospitals are facing in the U.S.