

# American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Wednesday, September 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

- Biden will host business leaders and chief executives at the White House at 1:30 p.m. for a meeting on the response to Covid-19.
- Biden is also scheduled to speak at 5 p.m. about a national security initiative.

### CONGRESS:

- House: Recess
- Senate: 11:00am - Convene and proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the nomination of Margaret Irene Strickland, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

## Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Bloomberg Government: Democrats' Expansion of Medicaid in Hold-Out States Clears Panel:** Millions of Americans in states that didn't expand their Medicaid programs under the Affordable Care Act could get government-sponsored health insurance under a measure approved by a House panel this morning. The House Energy and Commerce Committee voted 30-27 to advance the legislation.
  - The proposal would for the first time extend the ACA's insurance subsidies to Americans making less than 138% of the poverty level. Roughly 2 million Americans live in states that declined to expand their Medicaid programs for people whose incomes are too high to qualify for the low-income health program.
  - The panel will continue marking up more health care legislation today, including an embattled plan empowering the government to demand lower prices for medicines while limiting future drug price increases based on inflation.
- **Stat: House Moderates Rebel Against Pelosi Drug Pricing Plan:** Three moderate House Democrats are making good on their threat to oppose Speaker Nancy Pelosi's aggressive Medicare drug price negotiation, leaving its fate uncertain. Reps. Scott Peters (Calif.), Kurt Schrader (Ore.) and Kathleen Rice (N.Y.) have publicly stated their intentions to vote down Pelosi's drug pricing plan as part of the House Energy & Commerce Committee's markup on a sprawling safety-net package Democrats are advancing this week.

- Bloomberg Government: Scrap Proposed Medicare Pay Cuts, House Members Ask:** More than 70 bipartisan House members have joined a slew of medical organizations in calling for the Biden administration to nix portions of a proposed rule that would cut Medicare payment rates for some specialists by up to 20% next year.

  - The lawmakers say the cuts in the proposed 2022 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule would undermine Health and Human Services Department efforts to improve health equity by cutting reimbursements for specialists who treat cancer, kidney failure, artery disease, and other diseases that disproportionately affect Black and Latino beneficiaries.
- KHN: Over Half Of States Have Rolled Back Public Health Powers In Pandemic:** Republican legislators in more than half of U.S. states, spurred on by voters angry about lockdowns and mask mandates, are taking away the powers state and local officials use to protect the public against infectious diseases. A KHN review of hundreds of pieces of legislation found that, in all 50 states, legislators have proposed bills to curb such public health powers since the covid-19 pandemic began. While some governors vetoed bills that passed, at least 26 states pushed through laws that permanently weaken government authority to protect public health. In three additional states, an executive order, ballot initiative or state Supreme Court ruling limited long-held public health powers. More bills are pending in a handful of states whose legislatures are still in session.
- Bloomberg Government: California's Newsom Beats Recall Effort:** California Governor Gavin Newsom beat back a recall effort, with voters resoundingly deciding to keep the first-term Democrat in office after a historic special election. Democratic voters in the most-populous U.S. state turned out to defeat a conservative-led movement that was fueled by anger over pandemic restrictions. The result wasn't close, with major news outlets declaring the race in Newsom's favor less than an hour after polls closed. The outcome is a major win for Newsom and Democratic leaders who had characterized the recall attempt as a power grab by supporters of former President Donald Trump.
- Bloomberg: U.S. To Supply Covid Drugs Based On Cases Amid Delta Surge:** The U.S. government plans to more directly control where Covid-19 antibody treatments are sent amid a surge in infections and hospitalizations in states with large pockets of unvaccinated people. Hospitals and other care providers will no longer be able to directly order monoclonal antibody therapies from distributors, according to a Sept. 13 update posted on the Department of Health and Human Services website. Instead, the U.S. government will determine what quantity of the drugs to ship to each state and territory based on Covid-19 case numbers and use of the treatments locally. State health departments will then determine how to distribute the antibody therapies to hospitals and other sites, according to the HHS update.
- Bloomberg Government: Price Transparency Rules Pose Burden for Rural Centers:** The Medicare and Medicaid agency's requirement that hospitals list prices for common services is straining rural hospitals that were already at risk of shutting down due to the financial pressures of the pandemic. Many hospitals have already hesitated to comply with a Trump-era rule that required hospitals to reveal prices for outpatient services, citing the burdens and expenses of gathering and publishing that data.