

## American Nephrology Nurses Association

### Daily Capitol Hill Update - Friday, September 20, 2019

(The following information comes from Bloomberg Government Website)

#### Schedules: White House and Congress

##### WHITE HOUSE

- Trump hosts Australia Prime Minister Scott Morrison for bilateral meetings and state dinner
- 9am: President Trump, first lady Melania Trump greet Morrison and his wife Jenny at the White House
- 10am: Trump, Morrison have a bilateral meeting, followed by an expanded one at 10:30am
- Leaders to hold press briefing at about 11:45am
- 1:30pm: Trump receives intelligence briefing
- National security officials met yesterday to compile a list of potential targets to strike in Iran, if Trump decides to order a military retaliation, New York Times reported
- 7pm: Trump, first lady attend reception with the Morrisons, followed by state dinner

#### Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Azar Meets With Lawmakers:** Meanwhile, HHS Secretary Alex Azar yesterday huddled with Republicans and Democrats to talk drug pricing, congressional aides said, just hours before Trump sent out a confusing message on the topic.
  - Azar met with Reps. Mike Kelly (R-Pa.) and Darin LaHood (R-Ill.) and Grassley to discuss the Grassley-Wyden proposal. Grassley wanted to use the meeting to build support for his proposal, according to an aide. The meeting included a discussion of Pelosi's proposal to permit Medicare to negotiate with drugmakers for lower prices, according to an aide. Azar at the meeting said he needed time to review it. House Republican leaders spent the day deriding Pelosi's bill as "socialism" and a government takeover of the pharmaceutical industry.
- **Cicilline Introduces Drug Pricing Measure:** Rep. David Cicilline (D-R.I.) introduced a bill he says would "increase competition in the prescription drug market." The measure would prohibit pharmaceutical companies from engaging in "product hopping," which involves switching patients from a drug whose patent is about to expire to a new product that companies have the exclusive right to sell. "It's time for product hopping to be completely outlawed and for any bad actors to be held to account," he said in a statement
- **Democrats Avoid UAW Strike:** The Democrats running for president have tweeted support for striking General Motors workers. They've issued statements that unionized workers shouldn't lose their health care coverage during a contract impasse. But with

two exceptions, the 19 candidates haven't visited the picket lines -- even though the workers are the exact kind of voters they will need to defeat Trump in crucial swing states like Michigan in next year's election. "Where are these people at?" said Daniel Rider, a 46-year-old worker at GM's powertrain plant in Romulus, Mich., who gives \$10 a month to a United Auto Workers political action committee.

- "My guess is it's early and maybe more of a scheduling thing. If it keeps going for five, six, seven, eight, nine days, it might be something to be concerned about," said Eddie Vale, a Democratic strategist who works for labor unions.

- **Sanders First to Reach 1 Million Donors:** The presidential campaign of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) has 1 million individual donors, making him the first candidate seeking the Democratic nomination to reach the milestone in this cycle, his campaign said today. "Our strength is in numbers, and that is why Bernie Sanders is the only candidate who is able to say his campaign will rely only on grassroots funding in both the primary and against Donald Trump," Campaign Manager Faiz Shakir said in a statement.
- **Iowa Democrats Propose 'Satellite Caucuses':** The Iowa Democratic Party will propose instituting "satellite caucuses" to let voters participate even if they can't get to an official caucus site, according to Democratic National Committee members who have been briefed on the plan. The proposal, which would take effect for the caucuses in February, will be proposed today during a DNC Rules and By-Laws meeting. It comes after the DNC vetoed the state party's plan to let some people participate by telephone, citing cybersecurity concerns.
- **Koch-Linked Group Must Show Donors:** A nonprofit linked to the conservative Koch organization that spent over \$20 million to elect Republican congressional candidates must disclose its donors, according to a settlement with the Federal Election Commission. The now-defunct Americans for Job Security wrote in a settlement that it should've registered as a regulated political action committee beginning in 2010 because it spent most of its money to influence elections. Such PACS must disclose their contributors unlike nonprofits that say they are mainly interested in policy issues rather than political campaigns.
- **Zuckerberg Meets With Lawmakers, Trump:** Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg met with Trump yesterday as he tried to sway Congress and policy makers who have been critical of the practices of the social media platform. Earlier in the day, he clashed with Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) over his company's record on privacy and safeguarding user data. "I said to him, 'prove that you are serious about data, sell WhatsApp, and sell Instagram.' That's what they should do," Hawley told reporters after meeting with Zuckerberg. "I think it's safe to say he was not receptive to those suggestions."
- **Senate Clears Autism Programs Bill:** The Senate yesterday passed legislation that would authorize about \$370 million annually until fiscal 2024 for research, education and intervention programs for people with autism spectrum disorder, sending the bill to

Trump for his signature. The measure would allow program participants to receive assistance throughout their lives, not just in childhood.

- **Supreme Court Security Bill Proposed:** Bipartisan Senate legislation aimed at providing permanent additional security for U.S. Supreme Court justices was introduced against the backdrop of what a co-sponsor called the “volatile times” we live in. Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) are championing the measure that covers security when justices are off Supreme Court grounds.
- **Details Sought on States’ Use of Opioid Funds:** A bipartisan group of House leaders is asking 16 states how they’re using federal funds to improve opioid use disorder treatment and recovery. Leaders of the Energy and Commerce Committee, including Chairman Frank Pallone Jr. (D-N.J.) and ranking Republican Greg Walden (R-Ore.), sent letters to find out how much states have received in total, the challenges they have faced in getting funds to local communities, and if they have the ability to focus funds on the hardest hit areas in their states.
- **Extension Granted for Trump Tax Case:** Lawyers for Treasury and the House Ways and Means Committee have received an extension for the panel to file its opposition in a case over Trump’s tax returns. The extra time is needed because the Treasury Department filed new information about previously undisclosed communication between Ways and Means Democratic staffers and an analyst in the IRS Office of Legislative Affairs. The additional information is tied to a June 10 briefing that the panel staffers received from the IRS employee.
- **U.S.-China Talks Resume:** Trade negotiators from the U.S. and China resumed face-to-face talks in Washington, as the Trump administration said a Chinese delegation will visit American farmlands next week. Talks between a Chinese delegation led by Liao Min, a vice minister for finance, and Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Jeffrey Gerrish began yesterday and are scheduled to continue today. The negotiations are expected to lay the ground-work for top-level negotiations between U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Vice Premier Liu He in October in Washington.
- **Law That Spurred Renewables Gets Revamp:** A 40-year-old law that’s been key to the growth of renewable energy in the U.S. is set for a major overhaul that could change the way small solar and wind projects are developed. U.S. regulators on Thursday proposed setting new limits on which energy projects fall under the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act, a landmark law that helped spur an entire generation of solar and wind farms across the U.S.
- **Trump Vaccine Order Stresses National Security:** National security appeared top of mind for the White House yesterday as it unveiled its highly anticipated executive order

to develop better flu vaccines. The order, which doesn't include any additional funding, directs the departments of Health and Human Services Department to create a task force to "modernize flu production so we can have more modern, reliable, rapid methods for vaccine production," a White House official told reporters. The end goal is to be able to create powerful vaccines fast enough to fight off any potential flu pandemic while also setting infrastructure for better seasonal flu vaccine production.