

American Nephrology Nurses Association

Daily Capitol Hill Update – Friday, September 4, 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

- 11am: Trump welcomes leaders of Serbia, Kosovo to White House; participates in trilateral meeting at 11:15am

CONGRESS

- House, Senate out

Congressional, Health Policy, and Political News

- **Kaiser Health News: HHS Plan To Improve Rural Health Focuses On Better Broadband, Telehealth Services:** Knowing it may be met with some skepticism, the Trump administration Thursday announced a sweeping plan that officials say will transform health care in rural America. Even before the coronavirus pandemic reached into the nation's less-populated regions, rural Americans were sicker, poorer and older than the rest of the country. Hospitals are shuttering at record rates, and health care experts have long called for changes.
- **Bloomberg Government: Hearing Highlights:** National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins and U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams are scheduled to testify before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Wednesday on vaccines and public health, according to a statement from the committee.
 - The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee meets for a hearing Wednesday on the nominations of John Gibbs to be director of the Office of Personnel Management, and John M. Barger, Christopher B. Burnham, and Frank Dunlevy to be members of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.
 - The House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials plans a hearing Wednesday on Amtrak's response to Covid-19.
 - The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee holds a hearing Wednesday on the Federal Reserve's Emergency Lending Facilities.
 - The House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis scheduled a hearing Wednesday on conducting the November elections amid the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The House Financial Services Committee scheduled a virtual hearing Thursday on financial aid for states and territories during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The House Oversight and Reform Committee plans a hearing Thursday on completing the 2020 census.
 - The House Natural Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples Thursday will hold a hearing examining the reopening of schools on tribal lands.

- **Bloomberg Government: Republicans Eye Vote on \$500 Billion Stimulus:** Senate Republicans are pulling together a narrow \$500 billion Covid-19 relief package, aiming for a vote next week, in an effort to prod Democrats back to the negotiating table. GOP lawmakers in the Senate, with encouragement from the White House, have been working for several weeks on a slimmed-down virus stimulus that would spend much less money than the \$1 trillion proposal put forward by Senate Republicans last month.

 - Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), a member of the body's Republican leadership, said earlier this week the Senate may consider the legislation next week, when it returns from an August recess.
 - McConnell expressed doubts about whether Congress can get a deal on another pandemic relief package when lawmakers return to Washington after a month-long recess, despite the Trump administration's push for a quick, targeted stimulus.
 - Any move to actually consider the bill would need 60 votes in the Senate, and Democrats are expected to block it in the absence of a deal between Pelosi and the White House. The House isn't scheduled to resume a legislative session until the following week.

- **The Washington Post: Penn State Clarifies Remark By Doctor About Myocarditis And Covid-19 Positive Big Ten Athletes:** Penn State clarified a comment by an official who stated earlier this week that cardiac MRI scans revealed that roughly a third of Big Ten athletes who tested positive for the coronavirus and were scanned appeared to have myocarditis. The comment by Wayne Sebastianelli, the school's director of athletic medicine, came Monday as he spoke to a local school board about high school preparations and precautions. According to a Penn State Health spokesman, Sebastianelli was speaking about "initial preliminary data that had been verbally shared by a colleague on a forthcoming study" and was not aware that it had been published, showing a rate of close to 15 percent among athletes, most of whom had experienced mild or no symptoms. Neither Sebastianelli nor Penn State conducted that study and he apologized for the confusion.

- **Stat: 'Carnage' In A Lab Dish Shows How Coronavirus May Damage Hearts:** Maybe we should think of Covid-19 as a heart disease. When SARS-CoV-2 virus was added to human heart cells grown in lab dishes, the long muscle fibers that keep hearts beating were diced into short bits, alarming scientists at the San Francisco-based Gladstone Institutes, especially after they saw a similar phenomenon in heart tissue from Covid-19 patients' autopsies. Their experiments could potentially explain why some people still feel short of breath after their Covid infections clear and add to worries that survivors may be at risk for future heart failure.