



April 30, 2026

Dear Colleague:

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) continues to advance policies that improve care, expand access to transplantation, and strengthen the federal response to kidney diseases. Building on recent advocacy and engagement with policymakers, ASN is encouraged to see growing momentum in Washington, DC, around kidney health priorities.

**1) Congressional Momentum Toward an HHS Kidney Health Leader**

ASN welcomed a recent [bipartisan congressional letter](#) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) calling for the establishment of an HHS Officer of Kidney Health and Transplantation. The letter from Representative Vern Buchanan, Vice Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee and Chair of the Health Subcommittee, and Representative Lloyd Doggett, Ranking Member of the Health Subcommittee, reflects increasing recognition of the need for coordinated federal leadership on kidney diseases and transplantation. Importantly, this letter was spurred by many years of Congressional relationship building. The testimony of ASN Health Policy Scholar Suzanne Watnick, MD, FASN, at the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee hearing featured in [last month's Dear Colleague letter](#), demonstrated the impact of sustained advocacy and education. Establishing a dedicated kidney health leader within HHS has long been a priority for ASN and represents a critical step toward improving coordination, accountability, and outcomes across federal programs.

**2) ASN Urges Improvements to Organ Procurement Organization Reform**

ASN [submitted comments](#) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on proposed reforms to organ procurement organizations (OPOs). In its letter, ASN emphasized the importance of policies that increase transparency, strengthen accountability, and improve organ recovery and utilization. ASN also highlighted the need to ensure that reforms are implemented in a way that promotes equity and avoids unintended consequences for patients awaiting transplantation.

**3) ASN Provides Recommendations for the Future of Kidney Care Models**

ASN [submitted comments](#) to CMS on a potential second iteration of the Kidney Care Choices (KCC) Model, outlining both the model's strengths and areas for improvement. ASN highlighted the model's role in advancing value-based kidney care while identifying opportunities to refine benchmarking, improve incentives, and better support providers caring for complex patient populations. ASN urged CMS to build on the beneficial aspects and lessons learned from the current model to ensure future iterations more effectively improve patient outcomes and expand access to high-quality care.

#### **4) ASN Partners with Community for Congressional Briefing on Kidney Health**

On Thursday, April 23, ASN partnered with the American Kidney Fund, American Society of Pediatric Nephrology, National Kidney Foundation, and the Renal Physicians Association to host a congressional briefing, [Kidney Diseases: The Hidden Crisis in American Healthcare](#), focused on educating Congress about the scope and impact of kidney diseases. I had the privilege of joining other national leaders in emphasizing the importance of sustained research investment and policies that expand access to transplantation and improve outcomes in kidney care.

The program highlighted the kidney community's shared key legislative priorities, including the Expanding Support for Living Donors Act and the Living Donor Protection Act to reduce barriers to donation, as well as the New Era of Preventing End-Stage Kidney Disease Act to strengthen research, workforce development, and care for rare kidney diseases. We also emphasized the need for federal investment, including \$1 billion for kidney research at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, \$77 million to modernize the Health Resources and Services Administration Organ Transplant Program, and \$25 million for KidneyX to accelerate innovation across the kidney care continuum.

#### **5) Transforming Kidney Health Research Report Garners Further Support**

Representatives Joe Wilson (R-SC) and Marilyn Strickland (D-WA) co-authored [a letter](#) to House Appropriators requesting \$5.5 million for the CDC chronic kidney disease initiative to expand programs aimed at increasing kidney disease awareness, early detection, and access to care and \$1 billion in kidney research funding at the NIDDK, as outlined in ASN's Transforming Kidney Health Research initiative, since federal research investment for kidney health equates to less than 1 percent of Medicare fee-for-service expenditures for Americans with kidney disease, and outcomes for advanced kidney disease research have seen only modest gains, particularly for patients on dialysis as more than 50% of patients starting dialysis die within five years.

A remarkable 31 co-signatories from both sides of the aisle joined this letter, illustrating bipartisan support to improve research and care for people with kidney diseases.

#### **6) World Health Organization Recognizes Kidney Health**

Annually, the leaders of ASN, the European Renal Association (ERA), and the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) meet in person to discuss issues of mutual interest and develop strategies for working together to improve the health of the more than 850 million people worldwide living with kidney diseases. ASN hosted this meeting in April, and I was impressed to learn more about ISN's successful advocacy for the World Health Organization (WHO) to adopt its first resolution on kidney health. Last year ASN partnered with ISN and other members of the international kidney community [to urge the WHO to formally recognize kidney diseases](#) as a major global health issue and will integrate kidney care into existing strategies to address noncommunicable diseases. I'd like to take this opportunity to formally thank ISN President Marcello Tonelli, MD, MS, MSc, for his leadership on this important issue, and I look forward to having ASN continue to support this endeavor.

**7) ASN Urges Administration to Enforce the No Surprises Act**

ASN urged federal regulators to address health plans undermining the No Surprises Act by shifting costs to patients, misusing technical guidance to withhold payments, and bypassing the independent dispute resolution process. [The letter](#), which was sent to the departments of Treasury, Health and Human Services, and Labor, called on the agencies to use their authority to strengthen enforcement, improve transparency, and ensure timely insurer payment.

**8) ASN NephroEconomics Webinar Now Available On-Demand**

ASN in collaboration with Columbia University Irving Medical Center Division of Nephrology recently hosted the [ASN NephroEconomics Webinar](#), providing timely insights into payment policy, value-based care, and the evolving financial landscape affecting nephrology practice and research. ASN members who were unable to attend live can still access the webinar [on demand](#) to better understand the economic and policy trends shaping kidney care.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to advancing kidney health. ASN looks forward to continuing this work together in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam M. Parikh".

Samir M. Parikh, MD, FASN  
President