



January 31, 2026

Dear Colleague:

Commencing my term as President of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN), I am honored to provide this monthly update. ASN is entering an exciting and consequential period—one in which scientific discovery, clinical innovation, and public health are converging in powerful ways. The strength of our community inspires me, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to lead boldly on behalf of people living with kidney diseases.

Looking ahead, ASN is focused on shaping a policy environment that ensures access to high-quality kidney care for all, accelerates research, and educates future generations of nephrologists and other health professionals. This month, ASN continued that work through targeted advocacy.

1) ASN Advances Quality Measurement and Patient-Centered Care

On January 6, 2026, ASN submitted [comments on the 2025 Measures Under Consideration List ESRD Measures](#). Supporting efforts by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Partnership for Quality Measurement to modernize quality measurement, ASN also advocated for policies that reduce unnecessary burden and better reflect outcomes that matter most to patients.

2) ASN Pushes for Broader Representation in Clinical Research

Also on January 6, ASN [urged the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs](#) to update accreditation standards and resources that would expand access to clinical trials. Ensuring that people with kidney diseases are fully represented in research is essential to delivering equitable, effective, and innovative care.

3) ASN Produces Major Kidney Policy Wins in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Labor–HHS Bill Being Considered

While not passed at the time of this letter, the Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations package currently being considered includes language that reflects a remarkable number of ASN priorities and positions the kidney community for continued progress:

- **Historic Support for Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH):** The bill provides \$48.7 billion for the NIH and \$2.3 billion for the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), which included a \$10 million increase. The legislation also maintains

the current NIH structure, requires congressional notification before grant terminations, preserves existing management of indirect costs, and imposes a 35% multi-year funding cap.

- **KidneyX and Innovation:** Congress included \$5 million for KidneyX, supporting development of breakthrough technologies such as the artificial kidney and next-generation diagnostics and therapeutics.

- **Transplant System Modernization:** The bill includes a \$5 million increase for Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Organ Transplant Activities, supports modernization of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN), including improvements to organ matching systems and information technology infrastructure, and affirms HRSA's authority to collect patient waitlist fees.

- **Living Donor Support:** Congress provided a \$1 million increase for the Living Organ Donor Reimbursement Program and included strong language supporting living donors and expanding reimbursement protections consistent with the Honor Our Living Donors (HOLD) Act.

- **Organ Transport and Equity:** The bill supports Federal Aviation Administration implementation of policies to allow organs to be transported "above wing," improving safety and efficiency in organ delivery.

- **Chronic Kidney Disease Prevention and Screening:** The legislation includes commitments to strengthen chronic kidney disease screening through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and CMS.

- **Telehealth Flexibility:** Congress extended key telehealth flexibilities that improve access to kidney care, particularly for rural and underserved communities.

These bipartisan victories reflect what is possible when ASN engages early and consistently with policymakers. ASN will continue to advocate for these kidney health priorities to be included in the final FY 2026 Labor-HHS appropriations package and then build on this momentum throughout 2026 to advance transformative policies that promote innovation, strengthen the workforce, and improve outcomes for all people affected by kidney diseases.

Earlier this month, I had the honor of representing ASN at the American Heart Association's *Advancing Cardiovascular–Kidney–Metabolic Health Together* roundtable. Alongside colleagues from the American Kidney Fund, the National Kidney Foundation, and the Renal Physicians Association, ASN helped elevate the voice of the kidney community in a collaborative dialogue that underscored how deeply interconnected our disciplines are, and how much progress we can achieve by working together. I look forward to strengthening partnerships between the kidney

and cardiovascular communities throughout 2026 that will advance patient care and promote innovation.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the Florida Society of Nephrology (FSN) on holding its 59th Annual Meeting earlier this month. During the meeting, ASN Quality Committee Chair Mallika L. Mendu, MD, MBA, FASN, and Senior Quality and Regulatory Affairs Associate Lauren Ahearn presented, "[Federal Legislative and Regulatory Policy: A 365-day Overview](#)." The audience engagement was fabulous. If you are interested in having ASN provide a similar presentation to your practice, division, institution, or health system, please contact policy@asn-online.org.

Thank you for your dedication to patients, to science, and to the [mission of ASN](#). I look forward to working with you to move kidney health policy forward in bold and meaningful ways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam M. Parikh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sam" and last name "Parikh" clearly distinguishable.

Samir M. Parikh, MD, FASN
President