
Window on Washington -This Week in the Nation's Capital - September 29, 2017, Vol. 1, Issue 28

Sep 29, 2017

CONGRESS

Budget

- **White House to Request Emergency Supplemental Funding for Puerto Rico:** The White House will submit an additional request to Congress in the next two to four weeks which is not expected to include any deficit restructuring measures for the island, which is currently \$74 billion in debt. Congress recently released nearly \$7 billion to FEMA to assist with the response to the crisis. ([Bloomberg](#))
- **House to Vote on Budget Resolution Next Week:** The Senate will mark up its budget resolution in committee as well with plans to vote on it two weeks later. The Senate budget resolution, which was released today, is available [here](#). The budget resolution's main purpose is a vehicle to unlock reconciliation which will allow Senate Republicans to move forward on tax reform without the input of Democrats. The budget resolutions are not expected to include instructions related to another attempt at health care repeal. ([The Hill](#))

Tax Reform

- **GOP Tax Framework: 20 Percent Corporate, 35 Percent Top Individual Rates:** The newly released Republican tax overhaul framework calls for cutting tax rates to 20 percent for corporations, 25 percent for small businesses and 35 percent for high-income individuals. The nine-page document provides only a few other new details about GOP plans for writing the tax code, however many of the policies outlined in the framework are ones included in the House Republicans' "A Better Way" plan released last year. ([Roll Call](#))
- **Trump Economic Adviser Insists Rich 'Not Getting a Tax Cut Under Our Plan':** President Trump's top economic adviser on Thursday insisted wealthy Americans would not see taxes drop under Trump's plan, despite provisions repealing the estate tax and eliminating the alternative minimum tax, both of which could help wealthier households. ([The Hill](#))
- **Republican Deficit Hawks Mostly Silent on Trump Tax Proposal:** While details have not been hammered out yet, there is a good chance that the mix of tax cuts proposed by the Administration will increase future deficits, putting some Members in an ideological bind. ([The New York Times](#))
- **Here's the GOP Tax Plan:** "Tax Relief and Simplification for American Families." ([Axios](#))

Healthcare

- **Senate Republicans Decide Not to Vote on Graham-Cassidy Repeal Bill:** Senators Collins, McCain, and Paul announced that they would vote against the legislation meaning that Republicans would not be able to meet the 50 "yes" vote threshold required under the reconciliation agreement set to expire at the end of the month. ([Politico](#))
- **Trump is Willing to Work with Democrats on Healthcare Reform:** President Trump said that Congress will try again on healthcare reform next year and this time he would be willing to negotiate with Democrats. He also said he is considering an executive order that would allow health insurance to be purchased across state lines. No other details are available. ([Reuters](#))
- **Insurers Have Announced Double-Digit Increases for the Individual Markets in Some States:** In many states, insurers faced a deadline of Wednesday to lock in their rates for next year under the Affordable Care Act and without any clarity on if the President intends to pay the cost-sharing subsidies, rates were increased in some states. Florida said that most of its 45 percent average increase in premiums stems from the risk that the Trump Administration will skip paying the subsidies. ([Bloomberg](#))
- **Congress Misses Deadlines to Reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Community Health Center Funding:** The House announced it will mark up a bill next week to reauthorize the program and the Senate has released a bill but not yet voted. Negotiations continue in both chambers and the earliest any state is expected to run out of money is December. The future for the community health centers is more uncertain as neither chamber has announced a path forward yet. ([The Hill](#))

Transportation

- **Fight Erupts Over Training Hours for Pilots:** A Federal Aviation Administration panel recommended last week that the government cut back dozens of aviation regulations, while a top Senate Republican is leading a charge to ease pilot training requirements. The industry has long pushed for some of the rule changes. But safety advocates are sounding the alarm, fearing the changes could make the skies less safe, attributing the country's airline safety record to heavy federal oversight. ([The Hill](#))
- **Senate Releases Driverless Car Bill, Does Not Address Trucking:** The bill, authored by Sens. John Thune and Gary Peters, would seek to help the car industry speed up deployment of autonomous technology by waiving traditional safety standards for up to 100,000 vehicles per manufacturer after three years. ([The Hill](#))

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

DHS

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- **DHS Planning to Collect Social Media Info on All Immigrants:** A new rule published in the Federal Register last week calls to include "social media handles and aliases, associated identifiable information and search results" in the department's immigrant files. ([The Hill](#))

Department of Energy

- **Department of Energy Announces \$36M for Carbon Capture Development:** The majority of the funding will be awarded to projects that increase carbon capture technology to engineering scale at existing host sites, with the rest slated to bring a post-combustion carbon dioxide capture system up to commercial scale. ([Department of Energy Press Release](#))
- **Secretary Perry Concerned Over Lack of Federal Oversight for Interstate Pipelines:** Perry said that oversight for this type of infrastructure could only occur if there were a statutory change as currently the Department has little power itself to address state-federal jurisdiction. ([Utility Dive](#))

HHS

- **Trump Unhappy with Price's Use of Private Jets:** When President Trump was asked if he would fire Secretary Price over the use of private jets at taxpayer expense, Trump responded with "we'll see." ([Politico](#))
- **HHS Cancels Participation at Healthcare Enrollment Events:** HHS announced that it would not participate in any ACA enrollment events after previously committing to do so. ([Vox](#))
- **NIH Announces that All FY17 Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSAs) Will Be for Five Years:** In response to Congressional criticism, NIH announced that CTSAs will be awards of 5 years instead of the previously stated 4 years. NIH says it can find the additional funding as long as the budget isn't reduced. ([Science](#))

Department of Justice

- **Justice Department Argues that Bias Rules Do Not Cover LGBTQ Workers:** The Justice Department argued that judges must interpret laws based on lawmakers' intent, and Congress didn't have the LGBT community in mind when it crafted Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The agency made its case in defense of a New York skydiving company accused of firing a worker for being gay. ([Bloomberg](#))
- **Review Finds Systematic Misconduct Problem at FBI:** The Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General reviewed a sample of 78 FBI employees who failed polygraph exams and in the review found a number of cases with "serious allegations of misconduct" that were never reported or dealt with properly. ([Newsweek](#))

CFPB

- **Big Changes Coming for Credit Firms in Wake of Equifax Hack, CFPB Director Says:** Credit reporting agencies are going to have to get used to "a new regime" in the wake of the Equifax consumer data hack, Director Richard Cordray said. ([CNBC](#))

NASA

- **Vice President Mike Pence Announces First Meeting of The National Space Council:** Vice President Mike Pence has announced the first meeting of the National Space Council is scheduled for October 5, 2017 at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, Virginia. The meeting will include testimonials from expert witnesses who represent the sectors of the space industry: Civil Space, Commercial Space, and National Security Space. ([Space Ref](#))
- **International Partners Show No Rush Regarding Future of ISS:** The partner space agencies of the International Space Station said they have had discussions about the future of the station beyond 2024, but indicated no urgency in making a decision. NASA Acting Administrator Robert Lightfoot said he has talked with the other partners about both an extension of the ISS as well as cooperation on the agency's proposed Deep Space Gateway, but no decisions on either were imminent. ([Space News](#))

Trade

- **Mexico Opens Way for NAFTA Talks to Run into 2018:** Mexico on Wednesday opened the possibility that talks to revamp the NAFTA trade agreement were so complex that they could run into 2018, beyond an end-December deadline designed to avoid Mexico's presidential election campaign which kicks off in March. ([Reuters](#))
- **U.S. Solar-Panel Industry Wins Government Commission Backing for Import Protection:** The International Trade Commission voted 4-0 to approve a request from the domestic solar-panel industry seeking relief under a little-used trade law that allows American companies to win government protection if they can show they suffered "serious injury" from a surge in imports. The ITC members will next consider what specific policies they believe should be implemented. ([Fox Business](#))

Russian Investigation

- **Roger Stone Defends Himself to Congressional Russia Investigators, Has 'Frank Exchange':** President Trump's longtime confidante Roger Stone accused lawmakers of making "falsehoods, misstatements, and misimpressions" with allegations of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russian officials during his appearance before a congressional panel on Tuesday. ([CNN](#))

White House

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- **Trump Proposes the Most Sweeping Tax Overhaul in Decades:** President Trump on Wednesday began an ambitious push to slash taxes and salvage what remains of his embattled legislative agenda in Congress this year, proposing a politically challenging array of tax cuts for individuals and businesses that would constitute the most sweeping changes to the federal tax code in decades. ([The New York Times](#))
 - **Trump's N.F.L. Critique a Calculated Attempt to Shore Up His Base.** ([The New York Times](#))

If you have any questions about this alert please contact your Clark Hill attorney.